



Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

June 2025

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
In Geography (4WGE2) Paper 1
Human Geography

Edexcel and BTEC Qualifications

Edexcel and BTEC qualifications are awarded by Pearson, the UK's largest awarding body. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers. For further information visit our qualifications websites at www.edexcel.com or www.btec.co.uk. Alternatively, you can get in touch with us using the details on our contact us page at www.edexcel.com/contactus.

Pearson: helping people progress, everywhere

Pearson aspires to be the world's leading learning company. Our aim is to help everyone progress in their lives through education. We believe in every kind of learning, for all kinds of people, wherever they are in the world. We've been involved in education for over 150 years, and by working across 70 countries, in 100 languages, we have built an international reputation for our commitment to high standards and raising achievement through innovation in education. Find out more about how we can help you and your students at: www.pearson.com/uk

June 2025

Question Paper Log Number P78656

Publications Code 4WGE2_01_2506_ER

All the material in this publication is copyright

© Pearson Education Ltd 2025

Introduction

This paper consists of three sections. Candidates answer two 25-mark questions from section A, one 20-mark question from section B, and one 35-mark question from section C. The fieldwork questions in section B include questions on both familiar and unfamiliar fieldwork contexts.

The total number of marks for the paper is 105. The exam includes multiple-choice questions, short, open response, calculations and extended response questions. The exam command words which are used in the paper are defined in the specification. Each of the questions is mapped to one or more of the

Assessment	Objectives	(AOs).
------------	------------	--------

In **Section A** candidates choose two questions from Economic Activity and Energy, Rural Environments and Urban Environments. The final part is an 8-mark extended response question that targets AO3 and AO4.

In **Section B** candidates choose one out of three fieldwork related questions relating to Economic Activity and Energy, Rural Environments or Urban Environments. In this paper there were short response questions based on an unfamiliar fieldwork context followed by an 8-mark extended response question based on a familiar fieldwork context.

In **Section C** candidates choose one out of three questions covering Fragile Environments and Climate Change, Globalisation and Migration or Development and Human Welfare. This section includes a range of question types finishing with a 12-mark extended response question which targets AO2, AO3 and AO4.

An important part of the extended response question is the particular command word that is used. The use of 'analyse', 'evaluate' or 'discuss' requires candidates to consider how to address these in their response, moving beyond simple explanations and demonstration of knowledge. While many candidates are attempting to address these command words, many still need to ensure that they have made relevant points to demonstrate they have addressed these command words. These extended response questions also require clear use of the resources (the questions remind candidates to refer to the resources), In general, candidates did attempt to include use of the resources provided.

Please note that there are no comments or exemplars for questions 4 and 5. There are comments and exemplars for question 6 as this is the most popular question chosen as an option and all advice and guidance applies to questions 4 and 5 too. The questions are provided in parallel and the resources for each are similar but with a different fieldwork context.

Question 1 (a) (ii)

Most candidates were able to identify one factor that can affect the location of secondary sector industries. The most common factor was the availability of raw materials or transport to get to the site.

Examiner tip:

The command word 'state' does not require a lengthy response; one or two words or a short phrase is sufficient. However, students must ensure that the answer is specific enough and relevant to obtain the mark.

Question 1(c)

In this type of question it's very important to use information directly from the resource. Most candidates were able to provide a clear reason for the change in primary employment. The most popular reasons were raw materials running out, mechanisation or development causing technology in farming reducing worker numbers.

Question 1(d)

The majority of candidates were able to name a non-renewable energy source, with *coal* being the most popular choice. However, a small number of candidates confused renewable with non-renewable resources. Some candidates missed the mark by stating the too broad option of 'fossil fuels' which does not meet the question requirement of 'one example'.

Examiner tip:

Candidates are encouraged to learn the definition and examples of key words throughout the specification.

Question 1(e)

Many candidates were able to provide two ways transport can be made more sustainable. Most students identified appropriate methods such as use of electric vehicles and public transport or cycling. The highest scoring answers were able to explain how these methods improved energy efficiency or reduced fossil fuel use, as well as improving people's health. A large number of students used the same reason twice (ie referring to reduced greenhouse gases). This limited their score to 3 marks as development reasons must not be identical in this style of question.

Examiner tip:

On this style of question try to use entirely different reasons/explanations for the ways selected – sometimes when considering sustainability looking at this through a social, economic or environmental viewpoint can make this easier.

Question 1(f)

The 3-mark 'suggest' questions can be challenging, as they require candidates to demonstrate double development of their ideas. In this question, candidates needed to identify an impact of the wind farm in close proximity to the village shown in figure 1b. The most common responses focused on the need to further damage the environment in the form of deforestation to increase the size of (extend) the wind farm. In the strongest answers, further marks were awarded for clearly explaining how this contributes to loss of habitat/biodiversity. Some candidates legitimately took the view of the villagers who would experience noise or visual pollution and therefore wish to move away/have a reduction in their house value. A few - more optimistic - candidates thought that the village would benefit from the increase in local electricity and further reducing their carbon footprint which was plausible and therefore credited.

Not all students recognised that the question referred to the **landscape** and instead gave impacts for the economy of Germany as a whole for no credit.

Examiner tip:

Candidates should be reminded that pollution by itself is not creditworthy. Named types of pollution such as air, water and visual pollution are all creditable.

Question 1(g)

Many candidates were able to provide suitable factors that can affect energy demand in a developed country. There is space to indicate their chosen country. Quite a few candidates were not able to select the right development context for their answer (giving examples such as the Brazil or Kenya). Prevalent answers focus on population growth increasing demand and mechanisation/development increasing technology use in factories to produce goods.

A notable minority confused 'supply' and 'demand'.

Examiner tip:

As long as the factor and its explanation are plausible for the type of country required then credit should be given. Arguably USA's population is stagnating but in the context of a developed country this is a correct response owing to migration, so has been allowed as appropriate.

Question 1(h)

These 8-mark style questions require the blending of the use of resources provided with the candidates own knowledge and understanding. They are not case study questions but are more applied. The same

skill, with the same Assessment Objectives (AO3 and AO4) is tested in the other options for questions 2 and 3. The mark scheme also has three levels which are fixed year on year.

There is an instruction on the question paper that 'You **must** use the resource in your answer'. Most candidates clearly used the resource to consider the different factors that can affect the relationships shown between population growth and resources. To reach the higher-level candidates need to do more than describe what is presented in the resource. Clear developed relationships and factors must be shown. The command word 'analyse' needs to be addressed to achieve full marks. Many candidates found this last part challenging as they did not know how to demonstrate analysis. It was encouraging to note that some candidates successfully addressed this, frequently through temporal analysis or by linking their response to contemporary agrarian development.

Comments relating to Ester Boserup were consistently better than those relating to Thomas Malthus. Most discussion centred around increasing food production through the green revolution, GM crops, aquaculture or irrigation.

The best answers explained which factor was most important and why, and a select few suggested that either/both had already been proven right (referring to famine/war or the Green Revolution as evidence) or contextualised it to parts of the world that had experience suggested by either or both models and their relevant dominant factors.

Question 2 (a)(ii)

Most candidates were able to state a biome with a severe climate. The most popular response was hot desert or cold desert, as well as polar environments.

Question 2(c)

With these types of questions, where there is an AO3 mark coming from the resource, it is key to use direct evidence, in this case a picture of a terraced, flooded field for growing crops with a settlement to the left of the image. Most candidates identified this farming landscape either using appropriate terminology or accurate description.

A small number of candidates attempted to identify tourist activities within the image, but these were not considered valid.

Examiner tip:

When a question includes a resource, candidates should clearly describe how the evidence from the resource supports or illustrates the point required by the question. They must go beyond simply stating what the resource shows and explain its relevance to the question being asked.

Question 2(d)

This question requires candidates to state one strategy used to improve air quality in rural environments. Most candidates tended to state strategies relating to planting trees or reducing vehicle emissions.

Examiner tip:

These responses require one simple idea for a single mark - there is no point writing longer answers as there is only one mark available.

Question 2(e)

In general, there were lots of good answers of the advantages and disadvantages of GM crops. Popular advantages included reduced use of chemicals such as pesticides or drought-resistance alongside disadvantages like cost as a barrier to use because of their need for scientific research and people being wary of them owing to a lack of data relating to long term effects on human health – this was accepted as a plausible reason owing to lack of evidence to the contrary.

Question 2(f)

In this question, candidates were required to use information from the resource to suggest how governments can help reduce isolation in rural environments. Many candidates correctly identified the role of governments in providing funding for public transport or services. However, only a minority were able to develop their chosen examples to explain how these interventions could help address isolation in rural areas.

These 3-mark questions can be difficult, so candidates need to practise how to model a response that develops a single idea or reason and makes reference to information from the resource.

Question 2(g)

Most candidates were able to provide some relevant explanations of ways that the farm economies are changing. The question requires a developing country context. While most did select as suitable country, there were some that did not provide a country context or provided a developed country.

The majority of candidates were able to identify a country they had clearly studied and explain how farm economies have evolved over time, with some strong responses relating to the development and opportunities of tourism growth and diversification. There were some more unusual and well-thought out responses relating to particular locations which is always pleasing to see.

Question 2(h)

This question requires candidates to analyse possible factors that have led to the trend shown in 2c. The resource showed a graph of % employment in agriculture in European countries in 2005 and 2020. It was encouraging to see that many candidates made good use of the resource. Even at the lower end of marks, which focused on description of the data rather than explanation, there was clear engagement with the resource to form the response.

A notable number of students wrote about the causes of out-migration rather than the effects of the changes to rural areas so scored limited development marks.

Examiner tip:

When given a graph as a resource make sure you have used all parts of it in your answer to achieve a top level - if it has axes use information from both axes not just one.

Question 3(a)(ii)

Most candidates were able to state a factor that has led to suburbanisation. There were lots of responses related to counter-urbanisation, increasing in population and housing pressures and various types of pollution. For a simple one-mark question like this all relevant ideas were credited.

Examiner tip:

The command word 'state' does not require a lengthy response; one or two words or a short phrase is sufficient. However, students must ensure that the answer is specific enough and relevant to obtain the mark.

Question 3(c)

As mentioned previously, in this type of question it is essential that candidates use information directly from the resource. Examiners are looking for explicit references to Figure 3a and relevant evidence drawn from the image. The majority of candidates were able to identify the waste dumped in the river shown in Figure 3a, although a significant number used an unqualified 'pollution' for no credit, there were many excellent ideas as to how politicians could manage this issue, such as provision of waste disposal infrastructure or cleanup campaigns.

Examiner tip:

The word pollution must be qualified to score, in this case water pollution.

Question 3(d)

The majority of candidates provide a suitable reason for why segregation in cities can be a challenge. Many answers referred to inequality of opportunity or discrimination of one group of people.

Some candidates did not read the full question and misinterpreted the questions wrongly thinking that segregation was something that a government would be trying to achieve in a location.

Question 3(e)

Overall, this question has many well-developed responses demonstrating clear knowledge and understanding of the reasons for counter-urbanisation. Common responses focused on high property prices in city centres, larger homes wanted for growing families, retirement causing older people to leave the city for a quieter life.

Less able candidates used some half arguments not finishing their idea off with why they left the urban area as a result therefore not scoring all the marks. A few candidates repeated their reason, and this resulted in them scoring 3 marks in total.

A minority of candidates were confused by the terminology counter-urbanisation and wrote about rural-urban migration instead.

Question 3(f)

This question required candidates to suggest a reason why informal settlements (squatter settlements) has created challenges in urban areas. The majority of candidates demonstrated a sound understanding of issues that people in informal settlements have. Higher-scoring responses were able to explain consequences such as reduced hygiene standards and poor health as a result of living in cramped, high-density areas, and importantly, made clear links between these problems and the map showing squatter settlement growth rates in South America in Figure 3b.

Examiner tip:

As a suggestion to make sure all three marks are awarded make sure you use one piece of evidence from the source, then use 'because' and 'so' to create a point with both explanation and development. This is not the only way to score full marks, but it is a good way of making both development marks available.

Question 3(g)

In this question, candidates were required to explain two reasons for the development of brownfield sites. Many responses looked at cost, pre-used land with infrastructure/roads/utilities in place and access to sites close to the CBD in the heart of the old city.

Question 3(h)

This question required candidates to analyse why the strategies shown could improve the quality of life in cities in developed countries. The resource focused on two strategies: one from Germany and one from the UK. Many candidates were able to describe these strategies and suggest how they could

benefit the locations in question. However, fewer candidates were able to effectively integrate evidence from the resource with wider discussion of other viable strategies or provide deeper analysis of their impacts. A minority of students made direct reference to quality of life, many used the more general idea of 'improvement'. There was a lot of reference to climate change and environmental change, without explaining the links between this and quality of life. However, when this was done, it was done very well. Some excellent answers went well beyond the source to explain why green spaces might improve quality of life and/or thought 'outside the box'.

At the lower levels too many students simply lifted text from the resource which read quite well but was not able to score beyond level 1.

Examiner tip:

Candidates should be given regular opportunities to practise using resources to analyse the importance of factors or ideas, demonstrating their ability to make meaningful connections between them in order to produce evidence-informed analysis. To fully meet the requirements of the 'analyse' command word, responses should include a range of well-developed points supported by clear judgement and reasoning.

Question 6 (a)

Please note that the comments that follow for question 6 (Urban Environments) also apply to question 4 (Economic Activity and Energy) and question 5 (Rural Environments). Question 6 was the most popular option from section B so it makes sense to provide exemplars and commentary for this question. The questions are provided in parallel and the resources for each are similar but with a different fieldwork context.

In this paper there were a series of short response questions based on the unfamiliar fieldwork context, and an extended response question on a familiar fieldwork context. Candidates are provided with a space at the beginning of the familiar fieldwork context section to write the title of their enquiry. There were many candidates who provided very vague titles, no title at all or an irrelevant title.

The responses in this section show where candidates have clearly understood different aspects of their own fieldwork. It is important that candidates are able to consider different aspects of the fieldwork enquiry process and are prepared to answer questions on any of these from the design stages through to evaluation.

Question 6(a)

Most candidates could identify a piece of equipment relevant to the enquiry. The most common incorrect answer was 'photographs' on its own.

Question 6(b)

Q04b – Many candidates wrongly interpreted this question to mean that they needed to identify one type of secondary data rather than list one of the secondary data sources collected by the students in the resource. If the question was interpreted correctly, most candidates could identify which of the stated data sources were secondary.

Question 6(c)

This question required candidates to explain why random sampling was chosen by students to collect questionnaire responses. Many candidates provided sound explanations, highlighting the ease of implementation and the reduction of bias. Several responses also included examples to illustrate how random sampling operates in practice, which helped to strengthen their answers.

Question 6(d)(i)

In this question, candidates were required to use the data from Figure 6b to complete a bar chart. While many candidates completed the task successfully, some had difficulty accurately plotting the 95% segment, and others did not plot the correct data at all using a different site's data entirely. As long as the bars were in the correct order they did not need a label on this occasion to score both marks.

Examiner

tip:

Candidates should regularly practise constructing a variety of data presentation techniques, including bar charts. Attention should be paid to accurately selecting the correct data from a table or resource to ensure success every time.

Question 6(d)(ii)

This question required candidates to state one other method of data presentation method that could have been used for this data. The data was discrete and % data so should have been a pie chart or a compound bar chart. A minority suggested a bar chart again while others wrongly suggested a line or scatter graph.

Examiner

tip:

Candidates should be encouraged to consider what type of graph is most suitable for each type of data – especially knowing the difference between which graph type suits continuous and discrete data.

Question 6(d)(iii)

The majority scored two marks by putting the appropriate value in the answer space. A significant number of candidates struggled with this question but scored one mark for evidence of use of the correct approach to calculating a range but with incorrect data. A very common wrong answer was 80-60-20. Students also frequently calculated the mean instead of the range.

Tip: Practice statistical data manipulation such as mean, median, mode and range with data so this question does not catch you out in the exam room.

Question 6(e)

In this question, candidates were required to state one advantage and one disadvantage of the bar chart shown in Figure 6c.

While many candidates did give good responses such as simple to draw and difficult to read a scale when in 10% intervals – showing they had looked at the specific graph, others wrote very vague responses that did not suggest the graph had been looked at.

Question 6(f)

This question assessed both AO3 and AO4, focusing on a familiar fieldwork context. Candidates were asked to evaluate the importance of qualitative data in reaching their own conclusions. Some demonstrated a secure understanding of what qualitative data are and how it can positively influence the reliability and clarity of a conclusion. The strongest responses provided a balanced and well-supported evaluation, with clear and explicit references to the candidates' own fieldwork investigations. Few related these to their conclusions in any meaningful way.

Examiner tip:

Candidates should be encouraged to critically assess all aspects of their enquiry by explicitly linking their methods to the original aims and final conclusions. They should also ensure that evidence from their own data collection is used to support and justify their conclusions.

Question 7(a)(ii)

This question required candidates to state two impacts of deforestation.

The majority of responses referred to climate change, habitat loss, release of stored carbon/global warming, soil erosion, flash flooding or desertification.

Question 7(b)(i)

This question required candidates to identify one labelled country with the highest number of people at risk of sea level rise, using Figure 7a. While the majority of candidates correctly identified India, a small number selected other 'black' countries from the figure that were not labelled, resulting in no credit.

Examiner tip:

Candidates should be encouraged to read questions carefully and pay close attention to the wording and visual detail in figures, ensuring their responses accurately meet the question's requirements.

Question 7(b)(ii)

This question required candidates to describe the pattern of people at risk of sea level rise in South America, using Figure 7a—a world map showing the number of people per country at risk from predicted sea level rise by 2100. When a question refers to a 'pattern', it is essential that candidates identify and describe a clear spatial trend. This can be achieved by referring to specific regions, clusters, or groups of at least two countries. Doing so demonstrates effective use of the resource, which is necessary to access AO3 marks. Some candidates' responses were not creditworthy as they failed to identify a viable pattern, instead offering isolated or vague observations.

Examiner tip:

World maps are frequently used in exams so it's a good idea for candidates to be able to recognise how to interpret patterns, trends, differences and similarities in such resources.

Question 7(b)(iii)

This question required candidates to suggest one reason for the pattern shown in Figure 7a. As with all 'suggest' questions based on a resource, candidates needed to both identify a pattern and provide a reason for that pattern. Some responses achieved one mark by identifying either the pattern or a plausible reason, but not both. Stronger responses explained the pattern by linking high-risk areas to population density, noting that

countries with large populations and / or many coastal cities are more vulnerable to sea level rise. Altitude was another favourite correct reason. Too many did not know where the equator was. A similarly large number did not understand the implications of the equator, suggesting that deserts are found on the equator.

Examiner tip:

A pattern needs to relate to 2 or more countries or a region of a country (northern versus southern, for instance)

Question 7 (b)(iv)

This question required candidates to suggest one way this data could be used by international organisations. could be used to guide where adaptation strategies are

most needed. Stronger responses developed this by explaining how it could help allocate funding or resources to high-risk areas. Others recognised the potential for the data to support international agreements on climate change, using it as evidence to highlight the urgency of global action. Less developed responses tended to make vague statements about helping people without explaining how data would inform decisions or be used by international organisations, which limited the depth of their response.

Question**7(c)**

This question required candidates to state two impacts of climate change. Many candidates wrote responses such as increased temperatures, extreme weather events, and melting ice caps. Some stronger answers also mentioned more complex ideas such as disrupted ecosystems, shifting weather patterns, or climate-induced displacement. A minority of students misinterpreted the question to be about causes of climate change, incorrectly suggesting sunspots or volcanic activity.

Question 7(d)

This question required candidates to explain how Milankovitch cycles and increased use of transport contribute to climate change. Many candidates produced well-developed responses particularly to the transport segment including cars as CO₂ producers and the relationship that CO₂ has to global warming. The Milankovitch cycles part was less well understood. Stronger responses referred to increased obliquity/precession and eccentricity and how these alter the amount of solar radiation received by Earth. Weaker answers confused solar variation with man-made causes or gave vague statements about “sunlight” without further explanation. To score well, both causes needed to be addressed with clear development.

Question 7(e)

The command word in this question is ‘assess’, which requires candidates to make a judgement—in this case, about the importance of biodiversity loss as a cause of desertification. While candidates are not expected to address every aspect of the resource, they are required to use it effectively to support their argument.

Lower-level responses tended to offer brief comments on each part of the resource without developing a clear line of reasoning. In contrast, higher-level responses demonstrated a well-supported judgement, evaluating the extent to which biodiversity loss and climate change contribute to desertification and often comparing it to other contributing factors.

Stronger responses recognised that biodiversity loss is both a cause and consequence of desertification. These candidates explained that the loss of vegetation and habitats leads to reduced ground cover, which increases the risk of soil erosion and land degradation. Many also referenced Figure 7b effectively, noting how desertification operates as a feedback loop, worsening over time through impacts such as the loss of soil nutrients, moisture, and increased CO₂ emissions.

Weaker responses often lacked evaluation and focused too narrowly on biodiversity without comparing it to other causes like overgrazing, population pressure, or drought. A common limitation was that students simply lifted phrases or labels from the resource without interpreting or analysing them. These responses tended to describe the diagram rather than assess the importance of biodiversity loss in relation to other contributing factors.

Some excellent answers explained how biodiversity loss could be mitigated (e.g. Great Green Wall) and therefore was less important than climate change.

Examiner tip:

Greater familiarity with the ‘assess’ command word is strongly recommended for future examinations. Candidates may find it helpful to begin their answers with a clear judgement or assessment, followed by supporting evidence drawn from the resource and their own knowledge. This approach can help ensure responses are focused and well-structured.

Question 7(f)

This question features the command word ‘discuss’ and assesses AO2, AO3, and AO4. Candidates are required to assimilate the specific resources referenced in the question and explore the issue by weighing arguments for and against the statement (agree vs. disagree). The question clearly specifies which resources must be used. To achieve the highest marks, candidates need to integrate evidence from both resources effectively. Additionally, it is crucial that candidates supplement the resources with their own knowledge and understanding to develop a well-supported and balanced response.

Candidates are required to use figures 7a and 7b to discuss the view: *The greatest impacts of climate change will be linked to sea level rise.*

This extended response encouraged students to engage in a balanced discussion about whether sea level rise represents the greatest impact of climate change.

Stronger answers used Figures 7a and 7b effectively, noting that sea level rise places tens of millions at risk—particularly in Southeast Asia—and presents serious threats to low-lying coastal regions. These responses also acknowledged other major impacts, such as drought, extreme weather, biodiversity loss, and food shortages. High-level answers examined the uneven distribution of impacts and the uncertainty surrounding their severity and future outcomes. Figure 7b was used to highlight how desertification can lead to increased CO₂ emissions, further intensifying climate change. Some really clever answers suggested that desertification could be resolved while sea level rise could not. The best responses offered a well-structured argument supported by evidence and evaluation.

Weaker answers often listed impacts without analysis or failed to engage with the viewpoint critically. There were a lot of strong responses to the question which demonstrated good AO3 and AO4, but sometimes lacked AO2.

Examiner tip:

It is important that a clear judgement is made. This is usually provided with a summary at the end of the response.

Question 8(a)(iii)

Most candidates could identify two impacts of rural-urban migration with most impacts being identified as linked to overcrowding in urban destinations rather than labour shortages in rural origins.

This likely reflects the numbers of students who study Urban Environments rather than Rural Environments.

Question 8(b)(i)

This question required candidates to identify one labelled country with the highest level of positive net migration, using Figure 8a. While the majority of candidates correctly identified Australia, a small number selected other 'black' countries from the figure that were not labelled, resulting in no credit. Canada was a particularly popular wrong choice.

Most candidates correctly identified Australia though.

Question 8(b)(ii)

This question required candidates to describe the pattern of net migration for Europe, using Figure 8a—a world map showing the net annual migration per 1000 population in 2020. When a question refers to a 'pattern', it is essential that candidates identify and describe a clear spatial trend. This can be achieved by referring to specific regions, clusters, or groups of at least two countries. Doing so demonstrates effective use of the resource, which is necessary to access AO3 marks. Some candidates' responses were not creditworthy as they failed to identify a viable pattern, instead offering isolated or vague observations or reasons that would have scored in subsequent questions but did not satisfy the command term here.

Examiner tip:

Candidates should be given regular opportunities to practise identifying trends and patterns from a variety of stimulus materials, including maps and graphs. They should be encouraged to support their observations with specific data from the resource to strengthen their responses and access higher-level marks.

Question 8(b)(iii)

This question required candidates to suggest one impact for the pattern shown in Figure 8a for host countries. As with all 'suggest' questions based on a resource, candidates are expected to both identify a clear pattern and provide a reason for that pattern. Some responses achieved one mark by addressing only one element—either the pattern or a plausible reason. Stronger responses demonstrated a more complete understanding by linking migration patterns to issues such as skills being accrued and brain gain in the donor countries. Others offered a more negative interpretation, referencing the role of overpopulation causing services such as schools and hospitals to be overstretched.

Question 8(b)(iv)

This question required candidates to suggest one reason why the migration pattern shown is useful in understanding the global economy. Many candidates were able to identify a valid point, such as the filling of skills gaps in host countries, which was typically awarded one mark. However, few candidates developed their ideas fully to explain how this contributes to the growth of the global economy, which was necessary to access the second mark. This highlights the need for greater focus on linking individual impacts to wider global processes in extended reasoning.

Question 8(c)

This question required candidates to state two reasons for the growth of mass tourism. The majority of candidates were able to correctly identify two valid factors and achieved full marks. The most frequently cited responses included disposable income, package holidays and cheaper air travel as causes.

Examiner tip:

Candidates should avoid using broad or vague terms such as "*quality of life*" without further explanation. While it is a valid concept, it must be clearly defined or broken down into specific aspects—such as access to healthcare, education, employment, or housing—to gain credit. Vague references to improved or reduced quality of life are unlikely to meet the level of detail required for higher marks unless supported by clear examples or further development.

Question 8(d)

This question required candidates to explain two environmental impacts of mass tourism. Many responses were well developed, with particular focus on planes creating carbon dioxide and shortage of water caused by over-abstraction. However, some candidates found it more challenging to fully develop their points. As with other 4-mark 'explain' questions, it is essential that candidates extend their answers beyond simple statements by clearly explaining the reasoning or consequences in order to access full marks.

A significant minority referred to economic or social impacts.

Question 8(e)

As in the previous 6 marks in section C, the command word 'assess' is one that a very large number of candidates have difficulty with. *In the specification this is defined as: Use evidence to determine the relative significance of something. Give consideration to all factors and identify which are the most important.* In other words, candidates are required to rank and/or make a judgement.

This question focused on the impacts of transnational corporations (TNCs).

Lower-level responses often took the form of a list, with brief, undeveloped comments on the functions of these organisations. While such responses could gain some credit, they lacked the depth and assessment required for higher-level marks. In contrast, the most effective responses began with a

clear judgement, selected a limited number of TNC impacts to explore in detail, and provided justification as to which TNC impacts are most significant. Well-structured responses that maintained a clear line of reasoning throughout were more likely to achieve the highest-level marks.

Question 8(f)

This question features the command word ‘discuss’ and assesses AO2, AO3, and AO4. Candidates are required to assimilate the specific resources referenced in the question and explore the issue by weighing arguments for and against the statement (agree vs. disagree). The question clearly specifies which resources must be used. To achieve the highest marks, candidates need to integrate evidence from both resources effectively. Additionally, it is crucial that candidates supplement the resources with their own knowledge and understanding to develop a well-supported and balanced response.

In this question, candidates were required to use Figures 8a and 8b to discuss the view: “*Transnational corporations (TNCs) are one of the most important factors for the*

growth of the global economy.” Most candidates supported the view, drawing on ideas related to the positives and negatives of transnational corporations (TNCs) and migration, as these themes were reflected in the stimulus material. Stronger responses demonstrated the ability to integrate evidence from both figures with their own knowledge, while also considering alternative perspectives or the relative importance of other drivers in the global economy such as trade, communications and transport.

There were a lot of strong responses to the question which demonstrated good AO3 and AO4, but sometimes lacked AO2.

Examiner tip:

Candidates should practise producing balanced responses to extended questions, ensuring they consider multiple viewpoints and provide material for effective discussion. To strengthen their answers, candidates should be encouraged to read more widely around the specification content, using sources such as newspapers, magazines, and reputable online articles to deepen their contextual understanding.

In addition, candidates should focus on developing their ability to demonstrate their own knowledge and understanding (AO2) alongside their use of source material. This is particularly important in longer extended response questions where synthesis of ideas and reasoned judgement are required to access the higher mark levels.

Question 9(a)(ii) – Although a majority of candidates were able to identify age and gender as the two features of interest relating to population structure shown on a population pyramid, many others offered responses that linked more to inferences that could be made from the age and gender make up of population pyramids, such as dependency ratio or working age population.

Common incorrect answers were where students were trying to describe population pyramids for different types of country, e.g. small base/ large base and what this

symbolised.

9bi

This question required candidates to identify one labelled country with the highest level of water insecurity, using Figure 9a. While the majority of candidates correctly identified Saudi Arabia, a small number selected other 'burgundy' countries from the figure that were not labelled, resulting in no credit.

Question 9(b)(ii)

This question required candidates to describe the pattern of water security in Africa using Figure 9a—a world map showing global water stress (insecurity) by 2040. When a question refers to a 'pattern', it is essential that candidates identify and describe a clear spatial trend. This can be achieved by referring to specific regions, clusters, or groups of at least two countries. Doing so demonstrates effective use of the resource, which is necessary to access AO3 marks. Some candidates' responses were not creditworthy as they failed to identify a viable pattern, instead offering isolated or vague observations.

Examiner Comment: This response is awarded 2 marks. One mark for identifying the pattern of Central Africa being at low risk in contrast to the north and south where water stress is extremely high/high. Pattern plus risk types is enough for 2 marks here as the data on the map is given in words not numbers.

Reasons are not needed for a describe command word.

Question 9(b)(iii)

This question required candidates to suggest one reason for the pattern shown in Figure 9a. As with all 'suggest' questions based on a resource, candidates were expected to identify a clear pattern and provide a justified reason for it. Some responses gained one mark by addressing only one aspect—either the pattern or a plausible reason. Stronger responses showed a more complete understanding by linking the level of water security in a country to rainfall and desert conditions to explain the observed pattern.

Question 9(b)(iv)

This question required candidates to suggest one way in which the pattern of food security could affect human welfare. The majority of candidates were able to provide developed responses, most commonly focusing on the impacts of malnutrition. These responses often made effective links between limited food access and consequences such as poor health, reduced life expectancy, and decreased productivity.

Examiner Comment 5023: This response gives a developed example of how food security can impact human welfare. 2 marks.

Question 9(c)

Most candidates were able to identify types of trade or aid that could reduce uneven development. Some students were not clear on whether this question related to development within or between countries, suggesting the building of a high-speed railway as a way to (eventually) reduce uneven development. More common responses were fairtrade, bilateral aid, FDI, tax breaks and government incentives.

Question 9(d)

This question required candidates to explain reasons why GDP and measures of political corruption are useful for understanding differences in development. The majority of candidates answered the GDP section better than the political corruption section. The Gini coefficient was commonly mentioned to look at inequality to great effect.

Question 9(e)

As in the previous 6 marks in section C, the command word ‘assess’ is one that a very large number of candidates have difficulty in understanding what exactly it is they are meant to do. *In the specification this is defined as: Use evidence to determine the relative significance of something. Give consideration to all factors and identify which are the most important.* In other words, candidates are required to rank and/or make a judgement.

This question focused on how factors have led to uneven development between countries shown in Figure 9b have contributed to uneven development. Many candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the different factors involved. The most effective responses began with a clear, well-reasoned judgement and revisited this in the conclusion, resulting in a well-structured and cohesive answer. Some candidates also approached the question by dividing their paragraphs into human and physical causes of uneven development—an approach that proved effective when accompanied by clear explanation and evaluation.

As with 7e and 8e there was very little assessment the lower end with most students simply writing a virtual bullet point list of the impact of each issue without reference to their relative merits.

Some excellent answers joined the issues together well (eg natural resources taken by other nations as part payment for infrastructure projects). Very few pointed out that some wealthy countries have developed *despite* the issues in the figure.

Question 9(f)

This question features the command word ‘discuss’ and assesses AO2, AO3, and AO4. Candidates are required to assimilate the specific resources referenced in the question and explore the issue by weighing arguments for and against the statement (agree vs. disagree). The question clearly specifies which resources must be used. To achieve the highest marks, candidates need to integrate evidence from both resources effectively. Additionally, it is crucial that candidates supplement the resources with their own knowledge and understanding to develop a well-supported and balanced response.

In this question, candidates were required to use Figures 9a and 9b to discuss the view: “Efforts to reduce the development gap should always focus on economic

improvements.” Most candidates did not support the statement, drawing on themes from the stimulus material such as water (in)security and the physical and human factors contributing to uneven development. Stronger responses successfully integrated evidence from both Figures alongside their own knowledge, demonstrating thoughtful evaluation. While many responses showed strong AO3 (interpretation and analysis) and AO4 (application of skills), some lacked sufficient AO2 (knowledge and understanding), which limited access to the highest levels. The use of the word always in the question created debate from the get-go.

Most candidates wrote more in line with ‘what is the best way to develop a country’. Some candidates gave a rundown of bottom-up versus top-down aid without a focus on economic (or other) improvements. Several really good answers explained that economic improvement could be used to achieve social improvements but there was very limited reference to places they might have studied.

Candidates should practise blending their own knowledge with unfamiliar resources provided in the exam. In longer extended responses, the ability to engage in analytical discussion is crucial for accessing higher levels. Although this is typically the final question on the paper, it carries a high tariff, so candidates should be encouraged to plan and attempt it thoroughly, rather than overlooking it owing to time pressure.

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- When answering the extended response questions, ensure you are clear about the requirements for different command words such as 'analyse', 'evaluate', 'assess' or 'discuss'
 - 'analyse' - investigate an issue by breaking it down into different components and making logical, evidence-based connections between these components.
 - 'evaluate' - measure the value or success of something, and ultimately, provide a substantiated judgement or conclusion.
 - 'assess' - evidence to determine the relative significance of something, considering all factors and identifying which are the most important
 - 'discuss' - explore the strengths and weaknesses of different sides of an issue/statement or question through reasoning and argument.
- Appreciate that the extended writing questions 8 marks are dominated by AO3 and AO4. Poorly balanced responses that concentrate on one of the AOs, or on AO1, in general will be confined to Level 1 or low-Level 2. Candidates benefit from practising this type of question from the beginning of the course.

- In the 12-mark extended response question in section C it is important to remember there are AO2 marks, which require your own knowledge and understanding to be demonstrated, as well as clear interpretation of the resources.
- Remember that while the extended response questions do not require a concluding paragraph, this is often the most effective way for you to demonstrate that you have met the command word, particularly where a judgement is required.
- Make good use of the resources, particularly in the extended response questions. It is important in the lower tariff questions where there is a resource related to the question that it is referred to, in some form, where required. It is important that evidence from the resource is used to answer the question as these are targeting AO3 (application of knowledge and understanding).
- Consider the number of marks awarded for each question to determine how much you need to develop your ideas. A 2- mark 'describe' question requires only some development to reach the second mark while a 3-mark 'explain' question requires further development.
- Where there is a question that asks to explain two ideas then you only need to provide some development for each rather than providing almost an extended response answer for one of these ideas. If a question is only worth 2-marks, you are not using your time effectively by writing a long answer.
- Where questions require you to describe data it is important you focus on description rather than trying to explain particular features of the data. Description can be identification of a trend or pattern (increase, decrease, fluctuation), which can be developed with further description (e.g. particular years where the pattern/trend changed), or through use of data to support the initial point. If looking at a graph use information from both axes in your response.
- For Section B, spend some time reviewing the different stages of geographical enquiry to ensure you are aware of what takes place at the different stages. This will help you to prepare for extended response questions on fieldwork, which target different stages in the enquiry. Pay attention to the stage of the enquiry being assessed to ensure you are providing the right response, eg recognising the difference between data collection methods and data presentation techniques.
- Be really clear which type of geographical fieldwork you have completed and which question in the exam paper this will align with: Energy and Economic Activity (Q4), Rural Environments (Q5) or Urban Environments (Q6).
- You are encouraged to use the Sample Assessment Materials (SAMs), specimen papers and past papers to familiarise yourself with the structure of the paper and the style of questions;

this will hopefully avoid situations where the rubric has not been followed.

- Review support material to become more familiar with the range of command words and how they are attached to different Assessment Objectives.
- Only write within the answer space provided, and not underneath or to the side of the answer space. Do not write in the margins of the page, or on blank parts of pages in the exam script. Use additional pages if you need more answer space and make sure these are clearly labelled with the question number.

