



Pearson
Edexcel

Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2019

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
In Global Citizenship (4GE1)
Paper 02R: Human Geography

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Publications Code 4GE1_02R_1906_ER

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Introduction

Overview

This has been the first sitting of the revised Pearson / Edexcel **International GCSE in Geography**. The old and new specifications have the similar demand in terms of content and assessment expectations, although the assessment is now more closely aligned with the home-based GCSEs.

It is worth reminding at this stage of the fact that the revised **International GCSE** has:

- Moved to the new grading system of 1-9
- Uses standardised command language and instructions for all questions
- Has AOs that are fixed for the lifetime of the specification.

In addition, best practice would suggest

- Schools need to develop an overall strategy skills integration as well as AO2 and AO3
- Scope for linking some case studies to fieldwork
- Maths and quantitative skills must be developed, alongside synthesis skills
- Academic writing should be nurtured and celebrated as part of the course
- Formative and internally assessments in school should to the published International GCSE command words, and any self-developed mark schemes rewarding for the appropriate response.

This examination paper, as with the others in the series, had been very clearly anticipated through the sample assessment materials (SAMs) issued at the same time as the specification, and the specimen papers that followed it. The structure of this **4GE1_02**, was identical to those that many centres had used as practice paper or mocks with their candidates.

Broadly speaking, the paper can be divided into three different types of assessment: **Section A, B and C**. All Sections have elements of the legacy but are examined differently. **Section A and C**, require less case study information and recall, instead more application and analysis. Section B the fieldwork was problematic for many. **Section C** uses multiple resources in the final 12-mark question and candidates need to recognise that these must be used explicitly throughout their answers at this point. Descriptive case study material is unlikely to add much extra credit unless it's used in the context of evidence to support an argument or point of reason.

There was also some confusion regarding how to prepare effectively for the fieldwork (**Section B**) part of the paper. The division between the '**familiar**' questions that question candidates about their own fieldwork and the '**unfamiliar**' questions that present scenarios that the candidates are invited to assess, is important.

Preparing candidates for the '**familiar**' questions is reasonably straightforward as long as centres ensure that their candidates are engaged in the process from the very start when selecting locations and sites for data collection. They need not have detailed recall of numeric data, but they do need to have an overview of the titles / focus and results, as well as a familiarity with specified data collection methods and presentation techniques. There is clearly a need to take candidates through the possible question types that can occur in this section of the paper and the reasonable expectations about their recall of their own fieldwork.

Questions more than likely will focus on justification and explanation, much more than descriptive recall.

It is a different task to prepare students for the '**unfamiliar**' questions, which will pose scenarios that candidates are invited to analyse before offering an assessment of a proposition offered to them in the question. The appropriate skills to use here need classroom practice built around the empowering of candidates to '**take-on**' the data / information and to understanding its relevance and possible limitations.

Once again, there were too many answers that suggested some candidates had not been well prepared for this task and therefore found the activity extremely challenging.

Despite the usual '**teething**' problems of a new specification, including some relatively new and admittedly challenging question types, it is important to celebrate the very many excellent answers from candidates who understood the challenges of the paper and had been thoroughly prepared in addressing the challenges of the International GCSE effectively.

OVERALL IMPRESSION

The overall impression given by examiners was that the paper has discriminated well between candidates and has proved accessible. However, Examiners did identify some issues in candidate performance which centres should be mindful in future preparation of candidates for this exam. This included:

- Breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding of the unit specification varied considerably, even with this relatively small sample of candidates. There was variation especially in knowledge and understanding of key theoretical concepts, particularly with

respect to some of the more technical aspects of geography, especially fieldwork.

- Although stimulus response material was provided many candidates are still not applying their knowledge accurately or relevantly. Many candidates still have problems in using evidence directly from the resource (an AO3 skill) in order to be able to generate a successful answer.
- Some candidates had a poor knowledge and understanding of the fieldwork questions, especially **Q4(e), Q5(e) and Q6(e)** when there was a tendency to write very generally about methods and techniques rather than giving a focus on the part of the enquiry pathway that was being examined. For this question, some failed to get into the L2 or L3 mark band as their answers were simply too sweeping and non-specific.
- In addition, there was often a lack of fluency and structure in the longer answers, many candidates just describing and explaining, rather than a focus on assessment, evaluation or discussion when appropriate. The balance of the AOs is very important for this revised assessment.

SECTION BY SECTION FEEDBACK

SECTION A: Questions 1, 2 and 3

There was some very mixed performance in this Section, ranging from exceptional to very weak. Questions with resources and application tended to discriminate the most, whilst questions which tested AO1 for instance were on the whole successfully answered.

- **Q1(d), Q2(d) and Q3(d)** for example needed to use explicit evidence from a resource and then develop an explanation based around the information selected.
- **Q1(f), Q2(f) and Q3(f)** were mostly successful with a mean of just over 3 in most instances. Where candidates did fall-down was when they did not properly develop their ideas or were only able to offer one reason.
- **Q1(g), Q2(g) and Q3(g)** was again mostly well executed with a mark from the evidence in the resource and additional double-development – linking ideas together. **In Question 2(g)** for example, some candidates seemed to be confused by the term

“trend”, so there is clearly a need for some centres to support candidates with some of this area of geography.

- In the **(h)** options candidates were asked to identify state a named developing or emerging country. Many stated places within the Middle East, e.g. UAE, Qatar, Kuwait etc. Please note that these were not accepted as developing, as per the specification definition in **Appendix 2**. Please refer to the latest Human Development Report from the UNDP.
- **Q1(i), Q2(i) and Q3(i)** were the extended writing responses on this part of the paper. As has already been indicated, responses with too-much case study material here are always likely to be locked into L1. These have an AO balance of **AO3(4) and AO4(4)**.

Analyse is defined as: ***Investigate an issue by breaking it down into individual components and making logical, evidence-based connections about the causes and effects or interrelationships between the components.*** In other words, students need to “blend” what the resource shows (and making explicit reference to it) with their own geography understanding.

SECTION B: Questions 4,5 and 6

In this Section, candidates were required to answer one out of the three questions available and as such, the questions mirrored each other. The following observations can be made:

- The evidence from marking and the item level data shows that students overall found this section challenging.
- There seemed to be confusion much of the terminology of fieldwork, e.g. “**secondary data**” and “**quantitative data**”. This shows the need for supporting glossaries, as well as the need to “**revisit**” the fieldwork as part of the revision process.
- The linking of a title to why it was suitable e.g. **Question 4(b)** seems to have confused the majority of candidates. This shows the importance of how candidates need to be empowered in the decision-making process of fieldwork, from the start, i.e. Identification of the question, through to evaluation. This pathway is given in full as **Appendix 5** of the specification.
- **Q4(d), Q5(d) and Q6(d)** was particularly notable in that a significant number of candidates seemed unable to understand the

either the purpose or mechanisms involved in analysis. Instead many wrote about their fieldwork methodologies or sampling.

- **Part (e) in Questions 4 to Question 6** had very mixed results. Item-level data shows a low mean indicating that students struggled to access what this question was really about. In many ways it is testing a similar set of skills needed for **Q1(i)** for example, in other words the making sense of a resource that has been provided. The best answers were able to **"take-on"** the resources and see how the table of questionnaire data for instance was fundamentally flawed, with errors in addition, no indication of question types and colours that did not help the interpretation. These so-called unfamiliar fieldwork questions can be prepared-for by using the student's own fieldwork approaches.

SECTION C: Questions 7,8 and 9.

This section contains a different balance of tasks and activities compared to **Section A and B**, including some AO4 mathematical skills, and the 12-mark extended writing task. As in previous questions, there is a clear ramp or incline of difficulty, starting with AO1 multiple-choice and finishing with the extended discussion.

- **Q7(a)(ii), Q8(a)(ii) and Q9(a)(ii)** were mostly very successful, showing some good map and identification skills from candidates. Similarly, the AO1 questions which are found at the beginning of the three options (**Question 7 to Question 9**) were also mostly well attempted by the candidate cohort.
- For **Q7(b)(iii), Q8(c) and Q9(c)** there are AO2 and AO3 marks here for a reason from the information shown in the resource. To get the AO3 candidates needed to identify specific places, regions or groups of countries from the world map. It's not sufficient just to give a reason without specific use of information (or pattern) from the map, since there is an AO3 mark here. Many found themselves getting 2 out of 4 as they failed to refer to the pattern on the Figure.
- The AO4 maths questions were attempted with mixed success. Remember that candidates need to be prepared to perform a range of procedures, outlined within the specification, **Appendix 4**. These include specific **"Statistical skills"**, where in this instance, range was asked about for this question. It is worth noting that there were a number of students who on **Question 7(d)** actually calculated the total amount of deforestation, rather than the range.

- The instruction "**assess**" was one that a very large number of candidates had difficulty in understanding what it was they were 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. Very few were able to do this, instead simply resorting to copying the information provided, typically resulting in a L1 response.
- The final 12-mark question. This question along with **Question 8(g)** and **Question 9(g)** has both a unique command instruction ("**Discuss**") and unique set of AOs (AO2, AO3 and AO4). What is required is an assimilation of the specific resources, and then investigating the issue (**through the statement: agree vs disagree**) through reasoning or argument.

The characteristics of an L3 response are one where the candidate shows a good understanding of concepts and interrelationships in the geography. They also deconstruct ideas across resources, with explicit use of data and evidence. There is also a clear conclusion which shows the bringing-together of judgements.

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, there are four themes that should be carried forward from this first round of the new **International GCSE assessments** in general, as well as on this, **Paper 2**. These are very much a reiteration of those that have been widely circulated at Pearson training events and on the Pearson website.

1. The role of the AOs (Assessment Objectives) in teaching and in learning

Candidates need to appreciate that the extended writing Questions 6, 8 and 12 marks are dominated by AO2, 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. As a result, candidates should practice this type of question from the beginning of the course. It would be a very useful class exercise to set an example from **Question 1 to Question 3** and **Question 7 to Question 9** for the new Year 10 or Year 11 candidates.

2. The need to use resources more

It was evident from this summer's **International GCSE** that resources (**maps, graphs, pictures**) remain challenging for many. Remember that the specification signals skills opportunities at the end of each topic, but teachers should feel confident is using a wide range to support topic-teaching. It's also an opportunity to update any resources that are used

from textbooks, that quickly date and show their age. Resources are used in the **International GCSE** to test quantitative as well as skills of analysis.

3. The importance of the command words for International GCSE

Centres and their candidates need to be comfortable with the 'new' and more demanding command words especially 'assess', 'evaluate' and 'discuss'. There are several key things here:

- Candidates should appreciate that, in most cases, they need to analyse a resource and extract information from it before embarking on an assessment.
- Candidates should understand that the nature of that assessment depends on the whole phrase at the beginning of the question, as in '**Assess the reasons...**', '**Assess the factors...**' or '**Discuss the view...**'
- Candidates should recognise that for extended writing "**assess**" or "**discuss**" is more than a simple explanation of a relationship or a pattern, but also an attempt to rank the most important reasons / factors from the minor ones.

4. Fieldwork and enquiry skills

Centres should understand that **Section B** of the paper exposed very marked differences across this, the first, cohort of candidates. To improve candidate performance, knowledge of key terms '**quantitative data**' is important and a glossary of these terms should be built up over the course. Candidates also need to be confident so that they appreciate that the '**unfamiliar**' fieldwork scenarios will not be perfect, and they are encouraged to look at any data resources and data critically. Practising these questions from the beginning of the course will help the new Year 11 candidates appreciate that these questions are not as difficult as they might imagine.

5. Grade descriptors

Centres may find the following descriptors, characteristics and traits useful when marking and assessing their own students work internally.