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Geography

Higher level

Paper 1

8 May 2026

Zone A afternoon | **Zone B** afternoon | **Zone C** afternoon

2 hours 15 minutes

Instructions to students

- Do not open this examination paper until instructed to do so.
- Answer the questions in three options.
- The accompanying **geography resource booklet** is required for this examination paper.
- The maximum mark for this examination paper is **[60 marks]**.

Option	Questions
Option A — Freshwater	1 – 2
Option B — Oceans and coastal margins	3 – 4
Option C — Extreme environments	5 – 6
Option D — Geophysical hazards	7 – 8
Option E — Leisure, tourism and sport	9 – 10
Option F — Food and health	11 – 12
Option G — Urban environments	13 – 14

Answer the questions in **three** options.

When relevant, answers should refer to case studies or examples, and where appropriate include well-drawn maps or diagrams.

Option A — Freshwater

Answer the following question.

1. Refer to the map on page 2 of the accompanying resource booklet.

The map shows projected water scarcity (when water demand exceeds availability) for 2050.

- (a) (i) State the continent projected to have the greatest number of countries with high water scarcity in 2050. [1]
- (ii) Identify the water scarcity level for the countries marked with **X**. [1]
- (b) Outline **one** possible **human** cause of high or extreme projected water scarcity in the countries shown on the map. [2]
- (c) Explain **two** ways in which local communities can improve access to safe water. [3 + 3]

Answer either part (a) or part (b).

Either

2. (a) Examine the role of different stakeholders in influencing the environmental impacts of agricultural activities on water quality. [10]

Or

2. (b) Examine how the risk of river flooding in different places is affected by changes to land use and river channels. [10]

End of Option A

Option B — Oceans and coastal margins

Answer the following question.

3. Refer to the pie chart on page 3 of the accompanying resource booklet.

The pie chart shows the causes of deaths from hurricanes in the Atlantic region between 1963 and 2020.

- (a) (i) State the percentage of deaths caused by storm surges. [1]
- (ii) State the percentage of deaths **not** caused by water hazards. [1]
- (b) Outline **one** impact of a hurricane on the physical environment of a coastal area. [2]
- (c) (i) Explain **one** benefit of aquaculture. [3]
- (ii) Explain **one** problem caused by aquaculture. [3]

Answer either part (a) or part (b).

Either

4. (a) Examine the importance of wave action and subaerial processes in the formation of coastal landforms of erosion. [10]

Or

4. (b) Examine the challenges for different stakeholders involved in the management of coastal flooding **or** erosion. [10]

End of Option B

Option C — Extreme environments

Answer the following question.

5. Refer to the map on page 5 of the accompanying resource booklet.

The map shows the extent of the Atacama Desert in South America.

- (a) (i) State the number of countries that include some part of the Atacama Desert. [1]
- (ii) Estimate the distance, in kilometres (km), of the Atacama Desert from north to south. [1]
- (b) Outline **one** climatic characteristic of a hot desert that makes it an extreme environment. [2]
- (c) Explain **two** possible conflicts over mineral extraction in cold extreme environments. [3 + 3]

Answer either part (a) or part (b).

Either

6. (a) Examine ways in which the causes of desertification may be managed. [10]

Or

6. (b) Examine the challenges to local **and** global stakeholders from tourism in extreme environments. [10]

End of Option C

Option D — Geophysical hazards

Answer the following question.

7. Refer to the topographic map on pages 6–7 of the accompanying resource booklet.

The topographic map shows a section of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park. The scale of the map is 1:24 000 and the contour interval is 20 feet.

- (a) (i) State the direction from the Keanakāko'i Crater (**A** on the map) to the Kīlauea Iki Crater (**B** on the map). [1]
- (ii) State the four-figure grid reference of the Keanakāko'i Crater (**A** on the map). [1]
- (b) Outline **one** way in which a volcanic hazard might impact human well-being. [2]
- (c) Explain **one** way in which communities may adapt to hazard risk through:
 - (i) government planning; [3]
 - (ii) personal resilience. [3]

Answer either part (a) or part (b).

Either

8. (a) Examine the relationship between the characteristics of earthquakes and associated hazards. [10]

Or

8. (b) To what extent are physical factors responsible for the impacts of mass movement events? [10]

End of Option D

Turn over

Option E — Leisure, tourism and sport

Answer the following question.

9. The table shows the top 12 festivals worldwide in 2023 (according to *International Traveller*).

Festival	City	Country	Latitude / longitude
Mardi Gras	New Orleans	USA	30°N, 90°W
International Ice and Snow Festival	Harbin	China	45°N, 126°E
Carnival	Rio de Janeiro	Brazil	23°S, 43°W
Holi	New Delhi	India	28°N, 77°E
Lazarim Carnival	Lazarim	Portugal	38°N, 9°W
Saint Patrick's Festival	Dublin	Ireland	53°N, 6°W
Songkran	Bangkok	Thailand	13°N, 100°E
Glastonbury Festival	Pilton	England	51°N, 2°W
Montreux Jazz Festival	Montreux	Switzerland	46°N, 6°E
Gion Matsuri	Kyoto	Japan	35°N, 135°E
Edinburgh Fringe Festival	Edinburgh	Scotland	55°N, 3°W
Burning Man	Black Rock City	USA	40°N, 119°W

- (a) (i) State the country with the greatest number of festivals considered to be among the top 12. [1]
- (ii) State the name of the festival located furthest north. [1]
- (b) Outline **one** physical factor affecting the choice of a festival site. [2]
- (c) Explain how unsustainable tourism growth in an **urban** hotspot may result in:
- (i) **one** environmental consequence; [3]
- (ii) **one** social consequence. [3]

(Option E continues on the following page)

(Option E continued)

Answer either part (a) or part (b).

Either

- 10.** (a) Examine the extent to which the involvement of transnational corporations (TNCs) in expanding international tourism benefits different stakeholders. [10]

Or

- 10.** (b) Examine the importance of cultural **and** political influences on participation in international sport by different groups. [10]

End of Option E

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Option F — Food and health

Answer the following question.

11. Refer to the graph on page 8 of the accompanying resource booklet.

The graph shows the contribution of several factors to annual carbon dioxide (CO₂) equivalent emissions for different methods of vertical farming in Sweden.

- (a) (i) Identify the factor that makes the largest contribution to carbon dioxide (CO₂) equivalent emissions in methods **A** and **B**. [1]
- (ii) Estimate the total annual carbon dioxide (CO₂) equivalent emissions, in kilograms (kg), produced by method **C**. [1]
- (b) Outline **one** way in which vertical farming can reduce the need for large quantities of water. [2]
- (c) Explain **two** reasons why there may be disparities in health between men and women. [3 + 3]

Answer either part (a) or part (b).

Either

- 12.** (a) To what extent can governance affect the severity of famine? [10]

Or

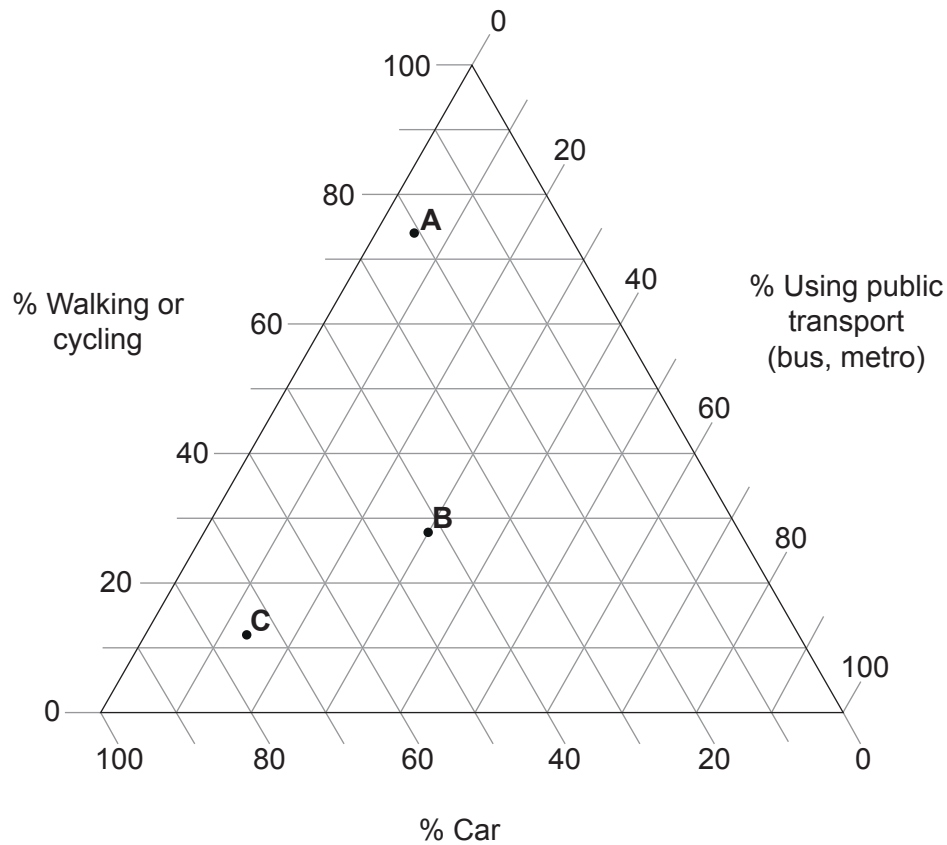
- 12.** (b) Examine the importance of different geographic factors affecting the rate of diffusion of agricultural innovation. [10]

End of Option F

Option G — Urban environments

Answer the following question.

- 13.** The triangular graph shows the main form of transport used for each trip during a typical weekday in three selected cities.



Key:

A	Utrecht
B	Sydney
C	Portland

(This question continues on the following page)

(Question 13 continued)

- (a) (i) Identify the city with the greatest percentage of people who walk or cycle. [1]
- (ii) State the percentage of people in Sydney who use public transport. [1]
- (b) Outline **one** environmental problem caused by the increase of vehicles in cities. [2]
- (c) Explain **two** different reasons for the location of large retail centres outside of towns. [3 + 3]

Answer either part (a) or part (b).

Either

14. (a) Examine how eco city design might contribute to the reduction of the urban ecological footprint. [10]

Or

14. (b) Examine the costs **and** benefits of urban redevelopment to stakeholders in **one or more** neighbourhoods. [10]

End of Option G

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References:

13. Prieto-Curiel, R. and Ospina, J. P., 2024. The ABC of mobility. *Environment International*, [e-journal] 185, pp. 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envint.2024.108541>. Open access CC BY 4.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>. Source adapted.