

Markscheme

May 2026

Geography

Higher level and Standard level

Paper 2

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Paper 2 Section C markbands

Marks	Level descriptor		
	AO1: Knowledge and understanding of specified content AO2: Application and analysis of knowledge and understanding	AO3: Synthesis and evaluation	AO4: Selection, use and application of a variety of appropriate skills and techniques
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.		
1–2	The response is too brief, lists unconnected information, is not focused on the question and lacks structure. - The response is very brief or descriptive, listing a series of unconnected comments or largely irrelevant information. The knowledge and understanding presented is very general with large gaps or errors in interpretation. Examples or case studies are not included or only listed. - There is no evidence of analysis. - Terminology is missing, not defined, irrelevant or used incorrectly.		
3–4	The response is too general, lacks detail, is not focused on the question and is largely unstructured. - The response is very general. The knowledge and understanding presented outlines examples, statistics, and facts that are both relevant and irrelevant. Links to the question are listed. - The argument or analysis presented is not relevant to the question. - Basic terminology is defined and used but with errors in understanding or used inconsistently.		

5–6	The response partially addresses the question, but with a narrow argument, an unsubstantiated conclusion, and limited evaluation. • The response describes relevant supporting evidence (information, examples, case studies et cetera), outlining appropriate link(s) to the question. • The argument or analysis partially addresses the question or elaborates one point repeatedly. • Relevant terminology is defined and used with only minor errors in understanding or is used inconsistently.
7–8	The response addresses the whole question, the analysis is evaluated and the conclusion is relevant but lacks balance. • The response describes relevant supporting evidence correctly (information, examples and case studies) that covers all the main points of the question, describing appropriate links to the question. • The argument or analysis is clear and relevant to the question but one-sided or unbalanced. • Complex terminology is defined and used correctly but not consistently.
9–10	The response is in-depth and question-specific (topic and command term); analysis and conclusion are justified through well-developed evaluation of evidence and perspectives. • The response explains correct and relevant examples, statistics and details that are integrated in the response, explaining the appropriate link to the question. • The argument or analysis is balanced, presenting evidence that is discussed, explaining complexity, exceptions and comparisons. • Complex and relevant terminology is used correctly throughout the response.

Section A

1. Changing population

- (a) (i) State which country had the largest number of internally displaced people in 2022. [1]
Philippines
- (ii) Estimate the percentage of the total number of internal displacements in Yemen caused by disaster. [1]
31-35%

- (b) Explain **one** way in which conflict may lead to internal displacement of people. [2]

Award [1] for a valid aspect/consequence of conflict and [1] for how it leads to displacement of people.

For example: Direct threats to life and safety from violence [1] can force people to flee their homes to a more secure/safer place [1].

Other possibilities may include:

- Damage to infrastructure/hospitals/schools [1] makes it difficult to sustain livelihood [1].
- Participation of workforce in military [1] leads to decreased agricultural production and famine [1].
- Forced expulsion by armed groups [1] land/territory seized to get resources and communities displaced [1]
- Economic collapse due to conflict [1] not possible to survive/maintain living standards [1]
- Persecution and human rights violation [1] populations flee for safety [1]
- Conflict causes insecure access to resources such as food and water [1] people migrate in search of food/water [1]

- (c) Explain **one** way in which forced migration can lead to disease outbreaks in the destination area. [2]

Award [1] for the way forced migration can lead to disease outbreaks and [1] for further development.

For example: Refugee camps are often overcrowded/high population density [1], increasing disease transmission rates [1].

Other possibilities may include:

- Lack of access to sanitation/clean water [1], leading to water borne disease [1].
- Disrupted food production/distribution [1] leads to malnutrition [1].
- Breakdown/disruption of medical infrastructure and products [1] no health surveillance/treatment interruptions/interrupted immunization programs [1]
- Displaced people have reduced immunity [1] exhausted and malnourished so have weaker immune system
- Displaced people travel through/from areas with disease [1] arrive with medical problems and these multiply [1]
- Displaced people excluded from local health care systems e.g. language/cultural barriers [1] do not seek timely medical help [1]

- Poor shelter conditions e.g. damp/poor heating or cooling [1] leads to respiratory or skin conditions

- (d) (i) Explain **one** challenge faced by women who are internally displaced. [2]

Award [1] for the challenge to females and [1] for development/explanation of how it forms a challenge.

For example: Vulnerability to violence/sexual assault/trafficking [1] as they are in an insecure environment [1].

Other possibilities may include:

- Limited access to female specific healthcare/healthcare services such as contraception [1] no hospital or clinics nearby [1].
- Economic hardship as many displaced females take survival/entry-level jobs e.g. work in the informal economy/low wage jobs [1] cannot continue with former means of livelihood [1].
- Loss of social status [1]. Traditional gender roles may be disrupted, impacting women's decision-making power and social standing [1]
- Education disruption [1] adolescent girls pulled from school for domestic duties [1]
- Exclusion/discrimination [1] women barred from decision making in aid and camp governance/access to services/employment [1]
- Women look after the vulnerable [1] gives physical stress and psychological/anxiety issues [1]
- Lack of access to female/menstrual hygiene/'toilet security' (concerns about privacy/sanitation/pregnancy specific needs) [1] leads to infections/long term complications/anxiety [1]

- (ii) Explain **one different** challenge faced by elderly people who are internally displaced. [2]

Award [1] for the challenge faced and [1] for development.

For example, mobility limitations of the elderly [1] make it difficult for elderly people to journey from the place of origin/ navigate new surroundings / access essential services / participate in daily activities [1].

Other possibilities may include:

- Older adults may have chronic health conditions/health risks [1] that are exacerbated by displacement/living conditions in camps/care is interrupted [1].
- Social isolation/loneliness [1] means that elderly people lose their support networks/relationships [1].
- Loss of access to pensions/ overreliance on pensions/loss of financial support from family [1], leading to financial hardship [1].
- Not being able to speak the language of their new community [1] makes it difficult to communicate / access services / integrate [1].
- Difficulties in finding suitable housing [1] such as accessibility features or proximity to healthcare services [1].

- Loss of identity and status **[1]** loss of position as community leaders **[1]**
- Mental trauma/depression/anxiety **[1]** new surroundings/lack of specialized geriatric mental services
- Risk of abuse and neglect/dependence on care givers **[1]** chaotic environments of displacement camps **[1]**

2. Global climate – vulnerability and resilience

- (a) Describe the trend in carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions between 1950 and 2022 in high-income countries. [2]

Award [1] for identifying the overall trend of decline over time and [1] for identifying the fluctuation/periods of decline. Or [1] for identifying rapid increase and [1] then decline over time.

NB. Quantification is required for full marks.

- (b) Explain **two** different ways in which economic development has led to increased greenhouse gas emissions. [2+2]

Award [1] for a valid reason associated with change in income and [1] for development that explains how this has resulted in an increase in greenhouse gas emissions.

NB. Possibilities must be linked to economic development.

For example: As economies grow, they increase energy consumption from homes and business [1], leading to high carbon / greenhouse emissions. [1]

Other possibilities may include:

- Clearing of forest / change in land use for economic development [1] releases carbon dioxide (CO₂) stored in trees / soil into the atmosphere [1].
- Increased production / consumption of meat/intensification of agriculture to meet growing demand from wealthier population [1], leading to increased methane / greenhouse gas emissions [1].
- Industrialization as countries develop builds more industries [1] use large amounts of energy which releases carbon dioxide (CO₂) / greenhouse gases [1].
- More economic development means increased consumerism/waste generation [1], leading to higher emissions e.g. methane [1].
- Developed economies have increased amounts of transport/trade [1] relies on fossil fuels which produce greenhouse gases [1]
- Economic growth associated with urban development [1] cities require power for electricity/concrete used in building [1]
- Increased car ownership/mobility as economy develops [1] burning of fossil fuels [1]

- (c) (i) Explain **one** impact of climate change on human health. [2]

Award [1] for a valid impact of climate change and [1] for associated link to human health.

For example: Climate change leads to prolonged higher temperatures / heat waves [1], which can cause heat stress / respiratory diseases in humans/weaken immune systems [1].

Other possibilities may include:

- Changes in rainfall patterns / flooding [1] increase the risk of waterborne diseases like cholera / food insecurity [1].
- Air pollution from increased wildfires/emissions/ dust from droughts [1] worsens respiratory conditions/asthma [1].
- Increased occurrence of extreme weather episodes [1] leads to increased death and injury//destroys health infrastructure such as hospitals [1].
- Food insecurity and malnutrition [1] reduced crop yields from drought leads to shortage/higher prices [1]
- Water shortages and unsafe water [1] leads to dehydration/poor hygiene [1]
- Mental health issues from anxiety/depression [1] fear of loss of homes/repeated disasters/displacement
- Melting of permafrost releases viruses [1] reactivates ancient/dormant pathogens e.g. anthrax and “zombie” viruses [1]
- Increase temperature/rainfall expand the zones of vector-borne diseases [1] new breeding habitats/lengthened breeding seasons exposes populations to malaria/dengue/Lyme disease [1]

- (ii) Explain **one different** impact of climate change on soil erosion. [2]

Award [1] for the impact of climate change and [1] for associated link to soil erosion.

For example: Climate change leads to intense rainfall events/flooding [1], increases rainfall erosivity contributing to severe soil erosion [1].

Other possibilities may include:

- Intense wildfires burn away the vegetation cover [1], making soil more prone to wind and rain erosion [1].
- Prolonged droughts reduce vegetation cover [1] fewer roots to bind the soil causes the soil to be more vulnerable to wind erosion [1].
- Sea level rise increases coastal erosion [1] loss of sediment and soil to the oceans [1]
- Degradation of permafrost via global temperature increases [1] land becomes unstable and subject to slope instability and soil movement [1]
- Stronger winds in some regions e.g. central Asia and the Sahel [1] dries out soil, strong wind events blow away soil [1]

3. Global resource consumption and security

- (a) Outline what is meant by *ecological footprint*. [2]

The theoretical measurement of the amount of land and water a population require to produce the resources it consumes [1] and to absorb its waste [1] under prevailing technology [1].

- (b) Explain **two** ways in which poverty reduction may lead to an increase in the availability of energy. [2+2]

In each case, award [1] for a valid link to poverty reduction and [1] its associated explanation/exemplification of how it increases the availability of energy.

For example, progress towards poverty reduction leads to increased access to money for government investments in improved energy infrastructure systems e.g. power stations and grids [1], ensuring that reliable and sufficient energy is now available in previously underserved areas [1].

Other possibilities include:

- More funding is available to corporate organizations to develop smart infrastructure / energy-efficient technology [1] that consumes less energy [1].
- More funding is available to central governments to import energy from another country [1] to augment the current energy supply / increase energy access to households [1].
- People are now enlightened to support greater demand for renewable energy initiatives [1] that are more sustainable at affordable costs for a continuous supply to remote communities.
- Skill training programmes in renewable energy installation emerge as part of poverty reduction strategies [1], which improves access to energy in underserved areas [1].
- More individuals can now benefit from the use of modern sustainable energy technologies [1], such as solar power, efficient lighting, or clean cooking technologies [1].
- Poverty reduction strengthens governments' capacities to invest in large-scale energy projects [1] to subsidize energy production to make energy accessible to low-income households [1].
- Higher household incomes increase access [1] people can pay for energy services/connect to networks [1]
- Richer household progress up the energy ladder [1] move from biomass to modern fuels [1]
- Reduction of poverty produces more taxes/less money spent on benefits [1] allows more investment in energy projects and infrastructure [1]
- Poverty reduction may increase the mobility of individuals and families [1] enabling migration to areas with more secure and reliable energy supplies [1]

- (c) Explain **two** factors that improve food security for **one named** country. **[2+2]**

For a named country, award [1] for a valid factor that improves/increases food security and [1] for an associated link to explanation/exemplification that is relevant to the named country.

NB. Both factors should relate to the same country. If no identified country or the factors are valid but not applicable to the stated country or two different countries are stated max [2]

For example: In Somalia (named country) job opportunities for young people will discourage youth from joining militant groups [1], which disrupts agricultural activities/hinders the distribution of food aid [1].

Other possible may factors include:

- [Named country: South Sudan]. Investment in irrigation systems / food storage facilities [1] can help farmers overcome the challenges posed by prolonged droughts [1].
- Investments in modern agricultural infrastructure in farming communities [1] will encourage more farmers to expand food production / reduce post-harvest losses thereby increasing food availability [1].
- Government investment/subsidies such as promoting climate-resilient agricultural practices / use of more drought-resistant crops [1] helps mitigate the impact of climate variability / to maintain all year-round cultivation of food crops [1].
- Improve food distribution systems [1] better roads/market systems/storage reduces delays and food losses [1]
- Social protection and safety nets [1] food aid/school feeding/emergency relief/food reserve systems [1]
- International aid e.g. World food Programme [1] distribute food, give cash transfers, provides development programs, address short-term food shortages caused by conflict and drought [1]
- Food imports e.g. cereals, fruit and vegetables, animal feeds [1] bridge gaps in supply/stabilize prices so it is affordable/provide year round access to food [1]

Section B

4. (a) (i) State the age group **and** weight status for males that lose 7.0 healthy years to obesity. [1]

Age: 50–59.

Weight status: Severely overweight

NB. Both age and weight status needed.

- (ii) State the range of healthy life expectancy for males in the least deprived areas. [1]
1.1 (68.3 - 67.2/67.2-68.3)

- (b) Explain **one** reason why healthy life expectancy may decrease. [2]

Award [1] for a valid reason for the decrease and [1] for relevant explanation of how the reason causes decreasing healthy life expectancy.

For example, the COVID-19 pandemic [1] led to disruptions in healthcare services / delayed diagnoses, treatments, and preventive care [1].

Other possibilities may include:

- Increasing prevalence of chronic diseases due to lifestyle changes [1]. Obesity, sedentary lifestyles, and unhealthy diets contribute to the rise of chronic diseases like diabetes and heart disease [1].
 - Ageing populations [1]. In older populations the incidence of chronic diseases increases [1].
 - Changes in socioeconomic characteristics, such as income or access to healthcare [1], may cause levels of poverty to increase, which leads to poorer diet / decrease in investment to healthcare facilities means diseases not treated [1]
 - Increase in environmental pollution/changing climate [1] exposure to air, water, and soil pollution can lead to chronic diseases and reduce healthy life expectancy/impact of consequences of climate change [1]
 - Increase in violence or conflict [1] more fatalities due to war/destruction of health facilities in conflicts [1]
 - Increase in mental health issues [1] increases cardiovascular disease, accelerates ageing/higher suicide rates [1]
 - Reductions in government funding [1] health infrastructure/prevention and cure does not address medical problems [1]
- (c) To what extent does the evidence in the infographic support the view that gender is the main factor influencing healthy life expectancy? [6]

Award [1] for each valid point of support/non-support. Award [1] for use of evidence from the infographic that validates the point made, up to a maximum of [5]

Award the final [1] for an overall appraisal, which weighs up the infographic as a whole.

If only one side of the argument is given award a maximum of [5] , Award [4] for valid points and support and [1] for an overall appraisal

Support for the view comes from the deprivation graph and obesity chart:

- The deprivation graph shows that healthy life expectancy is usually lower for males than females, in both most and least deprived areas.
- The obesity chart shows that years lost are higher for males than for females.
- Use of data to support the link using quantification.

- **Opposition** to the view is found in:

Evidence to oppose the view comes from examination of expenditure:

- The scatter graph shows a positive correlation between healthy life expectancy and the amount of health expenditure.
- The deprivation graph shows that where there is more money in an area there is higher healthy life expectancy.
- The scatter graph also shows that it is not always the case – the highest healthy life expectancy is not the highest expenditure, there is a range of expectancies on \$2200–2300, 70 has a range of expenditures.
- Use of data to support the link using quantification or named countries.

Evidence to oppose the view comes from examination of lifestyle:

- The bar chart shows that lifestyle alterations can reduce the risk of death by a range of percentages, physical activity is the highest, combinations of lifestyle alterations reduce the risk of death by higher percentages.
- The obesity chart shows that being overweight decreases the healthy life expectancy by a range of years according to age group.
- The obesity chart also shows that age is a factor – older age groups have fewer healthy years to lose.
- Use of data to support the link using quantification.

Evidence to oppose the view comes from examination of the map:

- This shows that location is a factor.
- Eastern Europe has lower healthy life expectancy /Western Europe has higher healthy life expectancy.
- NW Europe higher healthy life expectancy than SE Europe.
- Use of data to support the link using quantification

Section C

5. “The most important benefit of the demographic dividend to a country is larger consumer demand.”
To what extent do you agree with this statement? [10]

Marks should be allocated according to the mark bands on pages 3–4.

Possible **applied themes** (AO2) demonstrating **knowledge and understanding** (AO1):

- Responses should show an understanding of the nature of the demographic dividend. The demographic dividend refers to the economic growth potential that arises when a country experiences a favourable shift in its population’s age structure. This results in a larger proportion of the population being of working age (typically between 15 and 64 years) compared to dependents (children and the elderly). Some credit can be given to understanding of the factors that produce the demographic dividend – decline in fertility rates, lower dependency ratio, improvements in education, gender equity and good governance.
- Responses should show an understanding of market benefits, such as expanding consumer base where growing working-age population gives increased purchasing power and higher spending; increased consumer base; younger age profile diversifies consumer patterns; younger educated workforce gives innovation which leads to new markets; younger workforce can drive technology, which leads to new markets; expansion of retail sector; increased demand for banking and financial services from increased savings and market expansion attracts FDI.
- Responses should show an understanding of some other benefits of the demographic dividend:
 - The increased size of the labour force is a benefit for a country. Credit reference to increased productivity – output of goods and services; higher GDP; increased tax revenues that allow governments to invest in infrastructure, education, etc, which further stimulates growth; larger work force allows division of labour which results in specialization; attraction of foreign investment. Credit reference to the youthful nature of the workforce and resultant innovation, entrepreneurship and wider skill set of the population. Credit reference to labour market flexibility and resilience.
 - Improved health outcomes, as population profile is younger; lower mortality rates and better quality of life, as more resources are available.
 - Better education opportunities as fewer children per family, gender equality in education.
 - Social and gender equality – women gain education and economic opportunities.
 - Demographic opportunities from lower dependency ratios as lower economic burden on working population – able to support aging populations.
 - Demographic transition often accompanied by urbanization, which gives economies of scale, concentrates labour and capital to drive economic growth, and provides improved infrastructure such as transport, utilities and health care.
- When considering the extent of agreement, candidates could adopt a variety of approaches. Some may review the relative importance of different benefits. An alternative approach would look at the benefits in different places. Some answers may look at the changing importance of benefits over time.

Good answers may be **well-structured** (AO4) and may additionally offer a **critical evaluation** (AO3) which focuses on the relative benefits of the demographic dividend. Responses may address relevant key concepts in their discussion.

For 5–6 marks, expect a weakly evidenced outlining at least one benefit of the demographic dividend.

For 7–8 marks, expect a well-structured account, which includes:

- either a well-evidenced synthesis which considers a range of relevant ideas
- or a critical conclusion (or ongoing evaluation) informed by geographical concepts and/or perspectives.

For 9–10 marks, expect both traits.

6. “Gender is the most important factor influencing vulnerability to climate change.” To what extent do you agree with this statement? [10]

Marks should be allocated according to the mark bands on pages 3–4.

Possible **applied themes** (AO2) demonstrating **knowledge and understanding** (AO1):

- Responses should show an understanding of how **gender** influences vulnerability to climate change:
 - **Women**, especially in developing countries, are often more vulnerable to climate change. In many regions, women are responsible for securing food, water, and energy for their households, tasks that become more difficult with climate change. Women have less access to resources such as land, credit and education, which limits their ability to adapt to climate impacts. Women have fewer opportunities to participate in decision-making processes related to climate adaptation and disaster response.
 - **Men** also face vulnerabilities to climate change in their roles in dangerous or high-risk occupations, such as fishing and agriculture. Economic pressures resulting from climate-related disruptions can lead to mental health issues and increased stress.
- Responses may show an understanding of how other social differences influence vulnerability to climate change:
 - **Age**
 - **Children** are vulnerable to climate change due to their physical and developmental needs. Extreme weather events, such as heatwaves, floods and droughts, can lead to malnutrition, waterborne diseases and disrupted education. Children also have less capacity to adapt to changes in their environment, making them more susceptible to both immediate and long-term impacts of climate change.
 - **Elderly people** are more likely to suffer from health problems exacerbated by climate change, such as heat stress, respiratory issues and cardiovascular diseases. Mobility issues can make it difficult for the elderly to evacuate during extreme weather events, and social isolation can reduce their access to support networks during and after disasters.
 - **Working-age adults** are influenced by their roles as providers and care givers. This may place economic and psychological stress on the group.
 - **Education** increases awareness and understanding of climate change, and educated individuals are more likely to recognize the risks associated with climate change and take proactive measures to mitigate and/or adapt to these risks. Educated individuals are likely to have higher incomes and more access to technology to help prepare and respond to climate related events such as early warning. Higher levels of education foster critical thinking to give the development and implementation of new technology. Educated populations can also advocate policies to address climate change at a variety of societal levels. Education enables engagement with community and government organizations, which allows collective action and organisation in times of crisis.

- Responses may show an understanding of how other factors influence vulnerability to climate change:
- **Wealth** can be used to explain vulnerability – wealthier populations and individuals have the financial resources to invest in protective measures such as insurance, storm shutters and relocation, wealth gives access to technology to monitor risks and develop early warning, wealthy people can withstand the economic shock of climate change, poorer populations have less access to education and make less informed decisions.
- **Risk perception** allows an estimation of potential impacts of climate change and thus is linked to preventive measures, speed of action and adaptation. Risk perception is related to cultural/social norms, experience and media coverage.
- **Location** may refer to coastal regions and vulnerability to sea level rise, saltwater incursion and storm surges, mountain regions and glacial melt avalanches, semi-arid regions and drought, desertification, and water scarcity. Candidates may also refer to urban and rural vulnerability and economic development.
- When considering the extent of agreement, candidates could adopt a variety of approaches. Some may review the relative importance of different factors. An alternative approach would look at the factors in different places. Some answers may look at the changing importance of benefits over time. Other answers may refer to the interaction of different factors.

Good answers may be **well structured** (AO4) and may additionally offer a **critical evaluation** (AO3) which focuses on the relative factors that influence vulnerability to climate change. Responses may address relevant key concepts in their discussion.

For 5–6 marks, expect a weakly evidenced outlining of one or more ways in which gender affects vulnerability to climate change.

For 7–8 marks, expect a well-structured account, which includes:

- either a well-evidenced synthesis which considers a range of relevant ideas
- or a critical conclusion (or ongoing evaluation) informed by geographical concepts and/or perspectives.

For 9–10 marks, expect both traits.
