



GCSE

GEOGRAPHY

8035/2 Challenges in the Human Environment
Report on the Examination

8035
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General Introduction to the November Series

This has been another unusual exam series in many ways. Entry patterns have been very different from those normally seen in the summer, and students had a very different experience in preparation for these exams. It is therefore more difficult to make meaningful comparisons between the range of student responses seen in this series and those seen in a normal summer series. The smaller entry also means that there is less evidence available for examiners to comment on.

In this report, senior examiners will summarise the performance of students in this series in a way that is as helpful as possible to teachers preparing future cohorts while taking into account the unusual circumstances and limited evidence available.

Overview of Entry

The size of the entry was considerably smaller than previous series.

The standard of the entry was similarly unusual. There was an absence of many scripts in the middle range of marks c. 25-50 with a dominance of marks below 25. There were, however, a few good scripts with more detailed responses.

Rubric infringements were still seen regularly with many students, answering all three optional questions in section C. This was usually weaker students.

Comments on Individual Questions

Skills questions (AO4)

The divided bar charts (Q4/5/6) were usually accurate when attempted. The flow line map when attempted was sometimes labelled with a figure but only occasionally drawn to an accurate scale. However, too many students lost simple marks by missing one or other of these out. OS Map reading skills (Q1) were more variable with most able to give a grid reference but more struggled with scale and distance. Similarly, the ability to describe a distribution (Q1) using geographical terminology was disappointing. Compass points are useful, the coast is not 'the edge' and 'above' was often used when the phrase needed was 'north of'.

Maths skills were once again a reliable source of marks for almost all students. Where marks were lost it appeared to be the result of lack of care such as not rounding or not reading scales on a graph clearly.

Q 1: Urban Issues and Challenges

01.4 Most students showed some basic knowledge and understanding about sustainability but few could present a reasoned explanation beyond a simple link to climate change and therefore remained in level 1. Few responded to the photograph and the unusual vertical greening. Even fewer could fully develop the value of urban greening or articulate a social element to urban sustainability.

01.7 Students here only infrequently passed beyond low level 2. Most described the process of urban sprawl and identified simple features on the map extract as evidence of it. Development of answers to suggest impacts and / or make more than passing use of the map were rare.

01.10 A significant minority of students referred to a UK example. Pre-learnt answers covering both opportunities and challenges were also common. The latter approach did garner some success with occasional evidence of well-learnt case studies scoring higher marks. Both showed that AO3 marks will not be gained unless students read and respond to the question as set and that this skill can still be improved.

Q2: The Changing Economic World

02.3 Very few could make more than the most simple link.

02.6 Was very poorly answered with virtually no use made of the figure. This shows the need to address all of the specification as this is a clearly stated element in the LIC/NEE country case study that should have been a straightforward source of marks.

02.9 Most were able to express a view but few could support this with evidence or examples. Use of the figure was unusual. Many were also unable to consider other means of reducing the development gap and thus limited their marks as they could not form a considered judgement.

02.10 Very many students missed out this question or improvised answers based in urban areas which were simply irrelevant. When learnt examples were applied, usually Cambridgeshire and the Hebrides, answers became more effective, especially when evaluated.

Q3: The challenge of resource management

03.1 Very few obtained marks as they ignored the figure. When it was used the marks were easily gained.

03.3 Few were able to talk about why demand changes and then add a spatial element to that to make the link to a need for transfer.

03.4 Whilst many were able to lift figures and ideas from the resource, few were able to move beyond this to consider opportunities and challenges. There was, however, occasional good use made of current publicity for meat-free eating and local food networks, showing opportunities for relevance and topicality in Geography.

Q4/5/6 Food / Water / Energy

04/05/06.2 The need to complete graphs was highlighted by the number of students who made unforced errors such as 'Somalia eats no meat vs...'. .

04/05/06.5 Many students struggled to move beyond describing the resources without really bringing in their own understanding to make links to economic and social impacts. There continues to be limited ability amongst many students to articulate processes in human geography rather than attributing a direct causality between an event and outcome.

Concluding Remarks

The limited entry has made it difficult to compare this paper with previous papers in terms of outcomes, accessibility and the ability of the paper to differentiate.

The major area of weakness highlighted by this paper was a difficulty in applying Geography to unseen material and scenarios. A secondary weakness was insufficient knowledge of all examples and case studies required in the specification.

There was some evidence of sound knowledge (AO1) of both places and processes, though most answers remained generic in place terms and the understanding (AO2) lacked depth. Application (AO3) remains an area for improvement. Centres could benefit from providing their students with

opportunities to practise responding to the question as written and really interpreting figures and resources.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.