GCSE
GEOGRAPHY
8035/3
Report on the Examination

8035
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General Introduction to the Autumn 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.

Comments on Individual Questions

Question 01.1

Virtually all students used the resources effectively to select the correct response.

Question 01.2

The majority of students were able to suggest two appropriate answers, usually based on population growth and economic development. A small number of students appeared to consider that switching from combustion engines to electric vehicles would automatically increase energy use. This might reflect a lack of preparation or understanding in relation to the resources.

Question 01.3

The majority of students used the resources effectively to identify reasons why energy consumption in the UK might decrease in the future. In most cases observations about the decline of large scale industry and households using energy more efficiently were suggested, often being directly quoted from the resources. While identifying these points from the resources showed an understanding of the question, in most cases these ideas were not developed to offer a clearer understanding. Those students who did develop these ideas by observing that particular domestic appliances had become more energy efficient or that homes were using less energy because they were increasingly insulated or using low energy bulbs generally developed more sound answers. A number of students appeared to think that switching from combustion engines to electric vehicles would mean that cars no longer required energy or did not appear to fully appreciate that electricity was a part of the energy consumption budget.

Question 01.4

Relatively few students fully appreciated all of the links suggested by the question. A significant proportion of students made the point that renewable energy does not generally create air pollution and consequently this would help to manage climate change. However, the link between burning fossil fuels and increasing levels of specific greenhouse gases, with the subsequent effect on climate was not often fully considered. Those students that did attempt to consider this link and then reflect on how changes in the balance between using non-renewables and renewable

energies might play a part in reducing greenhouse gases generally produced clear or more detailed responses. A small number of students made thoughtfully evaluative observations by expressing observations about how building renewable structures may have added to the issue of climate change through the use of resources such as concrete or considered the impact of biomass on the carbon balance.

Question 02.1

Virtually all students used the resources effectively to select the correct response.

Question 02.2

The majority of students were able to offer an appropriate point about the suitability of offshore locations for wind turbines, with the most common responses centred around the ideas of less conflicts, ability to build larger turbines or wind farms or more reliable winds.

Question 02.3

The majority of students used the resources effectively to identify the environmental issues linked to the development of different types of renewable energy. While identifying these points from the resources showed an understanding of the question, in many cases these ideas were not developed to offer a clearer understanding and consider the idea of “extent” expressed in the question. Those students who did develop the basic ideas described in the resources by going beyond simply copying points and offering some explanation generally produced effective responses. Students scoring at the highest level initiated a clear discussion which evidenced the idea of “extent” by observing that some types of renewable energy had a greater environmental impact than others.

Question 03.1

The majority of students showed some understanding of the question and used the population pyramid in the resource booklet effectively to identify differences in age distribution between 2016 and 2041. Responses ranged from general points, which included; “less children in 2041”,”more older people in 2041”,”smaller working age population in 2041” to very specific age differences between 2016 and 2041.

Question 03.2

Very few students failed to attempt this question or scored zero marks. It was evident that the majority of students had prepared effectively for this part of the examination and virtually all students showed an understanding of issues associated with the development of large scale land based wind energy projects. The quality of answers was largely determined by how effectively the points within the resources had been developed in order to construct a discussion which supported the chosen position. The key to offering an effective discussion was the extent to which the selected observations were linked to the existing conditions on the Isle of Lewis and how the chosen position would affect the socio-economic prospects in the area, both in the short and longer term. Level 1 responses tended to be characterised by students who simply identified and largely copied points from Figure 3, in some cases virtually word for word. While the selection and copying

of appropriate evidence was clearly creditworthy it did not generally convey any degree of discussion or evaluation or any real sense of the relative importance of the different points expressed within the resources. Those students who developed their ideas further by using evidence from throughout the resource booklet and developing some of the identified points moved into Level 2. A more thorough and clearly evidenced and evaluative use of the resources to support the decision moved students into Level 3. At the highest level a small number of responses were accompanied by a short conclusion which reflected on the main points of the discussion. It was evident that some students had carried out additional research beyond the resources. While this might be useful in developing a broader knowledge base and an understanding of the issues associated with the development of renewable energy it should be remembered that the key is to ensure that the information within the resource booklet is fully understood and it is the analytical and evaluative use of the information which is significant in achieving the highest marks. It is also important that the synoptically linked elements within the Specification are identified within the resource booklet and clearly understood and that the resources are used effectively to support answers.

Question 04.1

This question presented few difficulties and a very high proportion of students completed the graph accurately.

Question 04.2

This question presented few difficulties and a very high proportion of students calculated the percentage correctly.

Question 04.3

The majority of students were able to identify Footpath A as having the highest quality and Footpath B as having the lowest quality. A small number of students achieved the correct answer by using the data to put the footpaths in rank order.

Question 04.4

The majority of students were able to suggest another appropriate method to present the footpath quality data. The most commonly used examples were pie chart and bar chart. A very small number of students did not appear to identify or understand the word “present” and incorrectly wrote about data collection methods.

Question 04.5

The majority of students were able to suggest how the questionnaire could be improved, in most cases by suggesting additional questions or modifications to the existing questions. A small number of students did not appear to understand the context of the questionnaire and suggested inappropriate questions or did not understand the question and made observations about other factors, such as presentation methods.

Question 04.6

This question presented few difficulties and nearly all students completed Figure 7 accurately.

Question 04.7

Virtually all students added a line between the South and East points but a significant number lacked the accuracy required in order to achieve the mark. In most of these cases the line drawn was much closer to the South point. Use of the scale line in relation to the distance was generally accurate.

Question 04.8

Very few students appeared to understand the word “pattern” and consequently this question was generally not completed with any degree of success. A significant number of those students who did appear to understand the question did not respond to the command and simply described the pattern rather than suggesting reasons, as requested..

Question 04.9

This question presented few difficulties and nearly all students completed Figure 10 accurately.

Question 04.10

Responses to this question were variable, with a significant number of students clearly not fully understanding the idea of “proportion” and consequently often simply copying the number of charity shops in each town and making simple observations about the relative amounts. This approach did not address the question and was self-limiting. Those students who did understand the idea of “proportion” usually calculated relative percentages accurately and used this information to make comparative observations about the towns, resulting in accurate and thoughtful answers.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the Results Statistics page of the AQA Website.