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GCSE

# GEOGRAPHY

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

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## General

This report covers responses from Paper 2 GCSE Geography in 2022. This was the fifth year of examining this specification, but only the third in which it had been attempted by a full cohort of students.

The 1 hour 30 minute paper with 88 marks was reduced to 1 hour 15 with 63 marks, however the full range of question types was retained: multiple choice, cloze exercises, short structured questions and longer extended prose answers. All questions came both with and without stimulus material. The questions required candidates to use and apply a range of skills, including the interpretation of photographs, graphs, maps, diagrams and charts.

Despite pandemic interruptions the paper showed evidence of thorough preparation for the examination. Students of all abilities were able to access the resources with good use being made of them for all of the questions. The rubric was generally followed, though there were more rubric errors, generally in the form of attempting all questions at least in part, than would be expected. However, the number of students gaining marks on all questions, including some which they could not have been taught, does highlight the accessibility of many questions for students willing to at least attempt answers. The full range of marks was seen. There were few instances where students failed to answer a question. There was limited evidence that students were short of time as most were able to complete the paper.

As the third full year of a non-tiered paper it proved to be accessible to students of all abilities as the questions elicited answers from students across the ability range. The paper still effectively discriminated between students of varying ability with a spectrum seen from basic answers at one end to some truly outstanding geography at the other.

Schools should be commended on the way they have encouraged all students to engage with the paper and on the amount and variety of content they have clearly taught, despite the forecast 'learning loss' of the last two years.

As we effectively remain in earlier years of the examination there are a number of general lessons to be taken which may improve performance as the full specification content and range of question formats become more familiar once again to students and teachers:

- Questions such as 01.4, 01.5 and 03.4 which require students to show understanding (AO2) and then apply this (AO3) still represent a significant challenge. Simply repeating case study information is knowledge (AO1) and cannot gain credit in this style of question. Simply repeating the words in the question is not application. Schools could usefully engage in further preparation of this aspect of the examination.
- Schools and students should remember that 10% of the marks come from mathematical skills and therefore they should be able to perform a range of mathematical skills accurately.
- Definitions and terms should be learnt properly as outwardly 'simple' marks can easily be lost for what should be standard terms. These terms should also be understood and then used in a geographical context. Rewording the terms in the question is not a definition.

- Where a source is provided, students are expected to make use of it, particularly where the command is “using figure... and your own understanding”, this fundamental skill (AO3) of extracting information from sources and then applying it remains an area for development.
- It was encouraging that almost all students knew, and were able to respond to, the majority of the command words. The key feature that indicated students operating in the upper levels was their ability to organise information to the specific demands of the question set.

### **Section A Urban Issues and challenges**

It was a little more difficult to judge this question this year against its normal equivalent of section B as they did not both contain a 9 mark question and were not attempted by all candidates. A significant feature of many answers was a good knowledge of case study material, which was offered in answer to questions with varying degrees of effectiveness. Students clearly read all the stimulus material provided but made better use of some aspects than others.

**01.1** Most students gained 2 marks and many showed working. The main issues were not rounding the answer or, in fewer cases, not reading the word ‘Asian’ and giving the mean for all cities shown.

**01.2** The mark scheme allowed full credit to candidates for explanation of rates of growth in HICs without specific reference to cities. 1 mark was widespread with reference to access to contraception, with better answers developing this to refer to lower birth rates. The best answers showed understanding of earlier industrialisation, urbanisation and urban-rural migration.

**01.3** Whilst only 1 mark, there was a wide range of answers. Some were very specific to a distinct place, with Rio, Mumbai and Lagos the most frequent, whilst others were very generalised with references to features such as ‘trade’ and ‘ports’. Few showed understanding of ‘regional’ which would have been more significant had more than 1 mark been available.

**01.4** Many students gained marks into level 2, though very few were able to progress into level 3. The majority spent their answer space repeating information from the figure with little or no development, just stating that quality of life was improved without saying how. There is an opportunity here to improve performance by clarifying the demands of the AO2 / AO3 questions, signalled by a command requiring understanding and the need to apply this in a new context, ‘use figure x and...’ and help students develop lines of reasoning that do more than re-state the text of the figure. Case studies were frequently in evidence but often presenting AO1 facts without developing and connecting these to the figure for AO2 and AO3 marks.

**01.5** This was well answered with good links to sustainability and many answers accessed level 2. Basic answers focussed on the general idea of renewable energy and / or absorbing CO<sub>2</sub> but better ones developed the concept of sustainability more by referring to reduced energy demand through recycling and lower fossil fuel consumption. Surprisingly few students responded to the photograph and therefore there were few options for response other than the bullet point text. There were some really good answers that could have gained more than 4 marks.

**01.6** Almost invariably correct. When not, it was through either missing the question or carelessness with accuracy.

**01.7** Again mostly correct. Taking more care to be accurate with graph reading could gain some candidates these straight forward marks.

**01.8** Most were able to gain 1 mark and many 2 marks. Nonetheless, this question highlighted the perennial need to develop the fundamental geographical skill of describing distributions and doing so accurately. Inaccurate compass points, the use of 'bottom of map' rather than south, sweeping statements about 'all' when it was a majority, were common errors. Some confused England and the UK and whilst many recognised Scotland, south Wales was invariably ignored, leaving a poor overall impression of some students' UK geographical knowledge.

**01.9** The international element was often missing from the responses seen, limiting answers to 1 mark. Many were able to give a generic impact – culture, more populated. Very few earned 2 marks as the idea of "diversity" was touched on but not exemplified. Some good city specific examples of China towns / Balti Triangle.

**01.10** This question differentiated well. The best students used contemporary examples that they understood and assessed well and even less able candidates often gained some credit. Students tended to give challenges that included congestion, air pollution, demand for housing, dereliction & urban sprawl, with some better ones focussing on inequality of access to society's resources after urban 'improvement' schemes. Most were able to give generic challenges that could be linked to most urban areas, but this did mean that a significant number of answers illustrated the 'geography of anywhere' as AO1 was not as strong as it needed to be. Some answers weren't particularly contemporary e.g. 1980s Docklands, 2012 Olympic Games, rather than the continuing regeneration of Stratford for example.

Many candidates had clearly rehearsed responses for opportunities and challenges and thus failed to address AO3 correctly by assessing the challenge, falling into evaluation instead. Students also need to remember that assessment requires quantification in terms of scale or time to be effective, mere assertion is not enough. This illustrates very well the need for good exam technique and the ability to adapt learning to the question.

## **Section B The changing economic world**

Comments here are tempered by the fact that these questions were not attempted by the whole cohort but it was encouraging to see many good answers which suggest improving confidence in this section from previous years, at least in those centres who attempted it. As in section A the range of knowledge and understanding was remarkable from the best students. The majority of students were willing to interpret the questions and attempt to answer. There was good evidence of a promising grasp of interesting contemporary issues and plenty of sound geographical understanding in the process. This does suggest that there is every reason to view this topic as accessible and meaningful to the students as the content has become more familiar to schools.

**02.1** This was largely completed well for 2 marks, with some carelessness and inaccuracy as a result of not employing a sharp pencil. A significant number missed it out, in some cases even when they had calculated the difference needed for the next question to the side of the graph.

**02.2** No issues and generally done well.

**02.3** No issues and generally done well.

**02.4** There was mixed success on this question with a range of marks. Some appeared not to understand what 'traditional industries' were. The majority gained at least some credit, usually for

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the idea of cheaper labour abroad and / or tertiary and quaternary shift, with only the best answers securing all 3 marks. Thus a relatively short question differentiated well.

**02.5** This question was generally answered quite well, with students of all abilities achieving a level. It was refreshing to see that many candidates had an awareness of the UK's position with some linking to the Commonwealth and movement out of the EU, although largely the EU was the main focus in responses. Some excellent answers considered tariffs, exchange rates and goods movement, including trade with the USA and China as well as the EU to good effect, although this wasn't necessary to gain marks. It seemed as if some students have a clear understanding of the issues and potential benefits and there were some maturely written responses linking different aspects of geographical study together.

**02.6** Done well, as long as it wasn't missed out.

**02.7** Also generally done well.

**02.8** Many students gaining 1 mark for an awareness of child death. Very few indeed gained the second mark for an accurate understanding of rate as being something per unit of population per year. Some confusion with life expectancy and some attempts to simply reword the question for the mark.

**02.9** A large range of responses and credit, again illustrating that these 3 mark questions can both reward and challenge. Many students just referred to 'more people working' but the best linking to factors such as the impact on maternity leave and therefore more women contributing to the economy. In many instances students understood the DTM but were unable to articulate how it links with changing economies.

**02.10** There were lots of references to aid given to earthquake disasters, clearly using paper 1 knowledge, which in many respects is encouraging but also a significant number of answers that confused aid with microfinance loans or tourism or TNCs. A missed opportunity really as many answers were quite basic and generic. Better ones tended to look at specific examples e.g. goat aid, mosquito nets or healthcare improvements and could then go on to specific impacts. AO1 was better than AO2 here, with less reference than expected regarding the impacts.

**02.11** This was answered really well and it was a shame it wasn't a 9 mark question as many candidates would have picked up the extra 3 marks. Nearly all answers referred to Shell in Nigeria. Whilst there is scope for many students to improve their discursive language, they handled the two sided argument style of this question better than the 'assess' command in 01.10.

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## Section C The challenge of resource management

The concepts and issues were generally well understood in this section. Students' performance was dictated by their ability to articulate and develop that understanding.

**03.1** Invariably correct.

**03.2** Answered well by many students, those who focussed on aspects such as health and disease generally seeing greater success. Many students need to understand the concept of social well-being better as some confused it with being sociable.

**03.3** Another well answered question from many with widespread understanding of the concept of food miles and carbon footprint. Not many gave specific examples of imports and / or origin countries but a lot were able to explain several aspects of the changing demand and make a clear link to the carbon footprint for solid L2 responses. Some candidates referred to locally sourced food and a reduced carbon footprint as a counter argument to the increase. A few were really detailed and worth beyond the 4 marks available.

**03.4** Most were able to apply the figure to illustrate their understanding of current and future water challenges, quite a few to level 2. More students did something with the text resources here than in 01.4, but answers tended to be repetitive about more demand. Few were able to access more AO3 marks by fully addressing the challenge although the process (AO2) was well understood. Many considered the south and existing water deficit as an issue from the stimuli. Some pleasing responses talked about responsible use of dishwashers actually saving water. Water transfer schemes were discussed by many but never elaborated upon in detail. Some used the information to develop the idea of the challenge of rising costs / bills, perhaps a reflection of current inflation concerns

## Question 4 Food

There was no discernable pattern of preference for this or any other question from the options, though this may be because of the incomplete cohort answering. The best answers showed detailed knowledge and understanding and accurate use of skills. Many gained marks, showing the accessibility of the skills questions for students of all abilities.

**04.1** Generally accurate answers, with a few let down by lack of care or the sheer size of the mark made. The logarithmic scale of the x axis did not seem to be a problem.

**04.2** Almost always correct.

**04.3** Generally accurate when attempted, though some who answered all other elements relating to the graph missed this out. A common error was to start the line from the origin and a few joined all the dots. Some errors were simply for want of a ruler.

**04.4** Most identified the basic link for 1 mark. Fewer were able to develop the point or illustrate the relationship with data from the graph. Some gave reasons and repeated themselves in the next question. Students should be reminded that repeating a relationship in the opposite is not creditworthy as development.

**04.5** Mostly well answered, though not often well developed to gain all 3 marks. Most gave basic reasons linked to wealth and the ability to purchase and consume more. Many rather repetitive so that as with 04.4 students should be reminded of how to develop points.

**04.6** The concept of insecurity was clearly well understood and many gained both marks as a result.

**04.7** Many students gave lots of AO1 facts without linking these to the demands of the question and therefore they found it harder to pick up marks for their understanding (AO2) or for the application to sustainability (AO3). Sustainability was recited often as a definition but not linked to the example chosen. The link to sustainability was less well done in comparison with 1.5. There were few L3 answers. Many ignored local schemes in favour of large scale such as Almeria. When relevant case studies were used, such as rice-fish farming, the answers were much better.



**Question 5 Water**

There was no discernible pattern of preference for this or any other question from the options, though this may be because of the incomplete cohort answering. The best answers showed detailed knowledge and understanding and accurate use of skills. Many gained marks, showing the accessibility of the skills questions for students of all abilities.

**05.1** Generally accurate answers, with a few let down by lack of care or the sheer size of the mark made. The logarithmic scale of the x axis did not seem to be a problem.

**05.2** Almost always correct.

**05.3** Generally accurate when attempted, though some who answered all other elements relating to the graph missed this out. A common error was to start the line from the origin and a few joined all the dots. Some errors were simply for want of a ruler.

**05.4** Most identified the basic link for 1 mark. Fewer were able to develop the point or illustrate the relationship with data from the graph. Some gave reasons and repeated themselves in the next question. Students should be reminded that repeating a relationship in the opposite is not creditworthy as development.

**05.5** Mostly well answered, though not often well developed to gain all 3 marks. Most gave basic reasons linked to wealth and the ability to finance and build appropriate infrastructure. Many rather repetitive so that as with 05.4 students should be reminded of how to develop points.

**05.6** The concept of insecurity was clearly well understood and many gained both marks as a result.

**05.7** Many students gave lots of AO1 facts without linking these to the demands of the question and therefore they found it harder to pick up marks for their understanding (AO2) or for the application to sustainability (AO3). Sustainability was recited often as a definition but not linked to the example chosen. The link to sustainability was less well done in comparison with 1.5. There were few L3 answers. Many didn't use a LIC/NEE scheme and opted instead for large scale schemes normally associated with water transfer. A number also answered in general terms regarding water conservation and 'grey' water schemes which limited their marks even though they understood how they were sustainable.

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## Question 6 Energy

There was no discernible pattern of preference for this or any other question from the options, though this may be because of the incomplete cohort answering. The best answers showed detailed knowledge and understanding and accurate use of skills. Many gained marks, showing the accessibility of the skills questions for students of all abilities.

**06.1** Generally accurate answers, with a few let down by lack of care or the sheer size of the mark made. The logarithmic scale of the x axis did not seem to be a problem.

**06.2** Almost always correct, though some who gave Jamaica by not reading the question or y axis carefully.

**06.3** Generally accurate when attempted, though some who answered all other elements relating to the graph missed this out. A common error was to start the line from the origin or a curved line in some cases. Some errors were simply for want of a ruler.

**06.4** Most identified the basic link for 1 mark. Fewer were able to develop the point or illustrate the relationship with data from the graph. Some gave reasons and repeated themselves in the next question. Students should be reminded that repeating a relationship in the opposite is not creditworthy as development.

**06.5** Mostly well answered, though not often well developed to gain all 3 marks. Most gave basic reasons linked to wealth on both a personal and a national level and the ability to thus purchase and consume more energy and energy consuming products. Many rather repetitive so that as with 06.4 students should be reminded of how to develop points.

**06.6** The concept of insecurity was clearly well understood and many gained both marks as a result.

**06.7** Many students gave lots of AO1 facts without linking these to the demands of the question and therefore they found it harder to pick up marks for their understanding (AO2) or for the application to sustainability (AO3). Sustainability was recited often as a definition but not linked to the example chosen. The link to sustainability was less well done in comparison with 1.5. There were very few L3 answers. Hydroelectricity in Nepal was a popular choice, along with very many general answers on 'solar panels' or attempts to use favela case studies for unspecified 'renewable energy'. Some used large scale HEP schemes. A number also answered in general terms regarding wind and solar schemes which limited their marks even if they had some idea how they were sustainable.

### **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

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