

Examiners' Report
June 2012

GCE General Studies 6GS01 01

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Introduction

As in previous series', most candidates were able to attempt most, if not all, questions. Marks were scored fairly evenly across the 3 sections of the paper, although the most notable differences between candidates who achieved average marks, and those who scored highly, was in the Section C essays.

Question 21

The majority of candidates were able to achieve either two or three marks. To achieve three marks answers had to include a compound calculation ie 1.04×1.04 .

SECTION B

Answer ALL questions.

You should aim to spend no more than 30 minutes on this section.

Read Source 1 on the separate insert and then answer questions 21 to 28.

21 Using the figures in Source 1, estimate the total amount of WEEE produced in the UK in 2009.

In 2007, 1 million tonnes of WEEE were being produced, this was growing at 4% per year

$1,000,000 - 10\% = 100,000$

$1\% = 10,000 \times 4 = 40,000 \times 2$

$= 80,000$ tonnes

In 2009 1,080,000 tonnes of WEEE was produced.



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Examiner Comments

Although this answer includes a calculation for two years with the correct original figure, the increase in waste has not been compounded and therefore the answer only gains two marks.

SECTION B

Answer ALL questions.

You should aim to spend no more than 30 minutes on this section.

Read Source 1 on the separate insert and then answer questions 21 to 28.

21 Using the figures in Source 1, estimate the total amount of WEEE produced in the UK in 2009.

$$2007 \quad 1,000,000 \times 1.04 = 1,040,000$$

$$= 1,081,600$$

$$2008 \quad 1040000$$

$$2009 = 1081600$$

$$\text{estimated total of WEEE in 2009} = \underline{1,081,600}$$



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Examiner Comments

This answer shows the correct compound calculation to give the correct answer of 1 081 600.

Question 22

Most candidates scored at least one mark, but few achieved the maximum three marks for this question. Many incorrect answers referred to factors such as an increasing population, which would not cause WEEE to grow faster than other waste, although it might increase the absolute amount of waste.

22 From your own knowledge, give three reasons why WEEE, such as discarded computers or mobile phones, is growing faster than other waste.

- 1 technology is improving quickly, everyone wants the new version so they throw the old one away.
- 2 Things aren't as well made so they break much easier.



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Examiner Comments

This answer gained one mark for *technology is improving*. The second answer refers to things not being *as well made* and is not correct. Most electrical items, for example, are usually better made and have a longer working life than in the past.

22 From your own knowledge, give three reasons why WEEE, such as discarded computers or mobile phones, is growing faster than other waste.

- 1 More technology is being developed over the years meaning that people will be constantly upgrading and therefore discarding more electrical items.
- 2 Technology is very expensive to repair and it's often less expensive to replace it. Therefore more people are throwing away electrical items rather than repairing them.
- 3 Technology has become much more accessible and therefore there is an increased demand.



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Examiner Comments

The first answer gains a mark for referring to developments in technology. The second answer correctly states that some items cannot be repaired economically - this is particularly true of electronic items.

Question 23

Most candidates gained a mark for identifying correctly the discussion of the Millennium Dome as the analogy. However, only a minority of candidates could then identify either the comparison being made or the conclusion of the argument.

23 Paragraph 2 includes an argument by analogy. Identify the comparison used in the argument and state the conclusion of the argument.

"WEEE presents several problems. Landfill is being used less for any types of waste, but some of the hazardous materials often found in WEEE present particular problems with contamination caused by heavy materials such as mercury. The site for the millennium dome was cleared, at enormous costs, of toxic sludge from a former gasworks. If we continue to bury our waste we will be leaving similar problems for the future"

(Total for Question 23 = 2 marks)

24 From the source, identify two hazardous chemicals which can appear in electrical or



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Examiner Comments

This answer includes the clearing of the Millennium Dome site and so identifies the analogy, but only gains one mark because the comparison used and the conclusion of the argument are not specifically identified.

23 Paragraph 2 includes an argument by analogy. Identify the comparison used in the argument and state the conclusion of the argument.

WEEE in ground fill sites was compared to removing toxic sludge from a former gasworks. The conclusion is good that we'll be leaving similar problems for the future.

(Total for Question 23 = 2 marks)



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Examiner Comments

This answer gained two marks for identifying the comparison between WEEE in landfill sites and toxic sludge and also for specifying the conclusion of the argument.

Question 24

Many candidates identified cyanide as one of the hazardous chemicals. This is incorrect because cyanide is only produced in some cases when equipment is incinerated but is not present in the equipment originally.

24 From the source, identify two hazardous chemicals which can appear in electrical or electronic equipment.

1 ~~cyanide~~ Cyanide - released by incineration.

2 Ozone depleting chemicals from refrigerators
e.g. CFCs (chlorofluorocarbon).

(Total for Question 24 = 2 marks)



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Examiner Comments

This answer gains one mark for identifying CFCs/ ozone-depleting chemicals.

24 From the source, identify two hazardous chemicals which can appear in electrical or electronic equipment.

1 mercury

2 ozone depleting chemicals

(Total for Question 24 = 2 marks)



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Examiner Comments

This answer correctly identifies both mercury and ozone-depleting chemicals.

Question 25

Most candidates gained one or two marks for this question. References to incineration were not relevant to the question and were not credited.

25 From the source, identify three reasons why waste refrigerators might be disposed of differently from waste toasters.

1. Refrigerators contain valuable metals such as copper that, when recycled, can be sold for a profit. Toasters don't contain these.
2. Refrigerators contain ozone diminishing CFC's, these need to be disposed of carefully to avoid environmental impacts.
3. Toasters are much smaller and can be disposed of with household waste. Refrigerators are too large for this.

(Total for Question 25 = 3 marks)



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Examiner Comments

The first answer correctly identifies the economic recovery of scrap metal from larger items.

The second answer gains a mark for pointing out that CFCs need to be removed from refrigerators.

The third answer correctly refers to the fact that smaller items can appear in the household waste stream simply because of their size.

25 From the source, identify three reasons why waste refrigerators might be disposed of differently from waste toasters.

1 There is already legislation in place to recycle refrigerators

2 Some contain copper and so can be used for their scrap value

3 The cost to manually recycle smaller electrical items such as toasters is uneconomical.

(Total for Question 25 = 3 marks)



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Examiner Comments

The first answer gains a mark for referring to the fact that there is legislation regulating the disposal of refrigerators.

The second and third answers are both referring to the same basic point ie that the recovery of copper is economic for large items but not for smaller items.

The overall mark for this answer was two.

Question 26

Almost all candidates gained two marks for this question.

26 Write down the names of two large household appliances, not mentioned in the source, which could be classed as waste electrical equipment.

1. Washing machines.

2. Boin Gas boilers.

(Total for Question 26 = 2 marks)



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

A gas boiler could not be classified as a waste electrical item.

26 Write down the names of two large household appliances, not mentioned in the source, which could be classed as waste electrical equipment.

1. Computers would be a waste electrical equipment because they are not essential to daily life and are ~~is~~ replace reguly around ~~every~~ ^{every} year

2. T.V.s are all so replaced reguly with new tvs coming out every year people want an upgrade and it has a bit of Hitek in it that could be recyceld.

(Total for Question 26 = 2 marks)



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

Computers are mentioned in the source material and are therefore not acceptable as an answer.

Question 27

Previous 6GS01 papers have included questions very similar to this one. In this paper candidates were able to identify correctly and discuss evidence from the source, better than in previous papers.

27 The source includes different types of evidence.

Assess the strengths and weaknesses of these different types of evidence, using examples from the source.

One type of evidence used in the source includes statistics, such as the fact that WEEE is growing three times faster than other types of waste. This use of statistics is effective because it will shock the reader and support the argument that the problem needs to be addressed. However, statistics without context are meaningless. We are not aware of whether WEEE is more harmful than other types of waste which may lessen our understanding of the urgency of the issue. An analogy is also used, which can sometimes be a poor comparison and weaken the argument, but in this case the example of the Millennium Dome merely serves as an illustration of the dangers of WEEE to help the reader understand.

The source also provides examples from the past that 'enhance our landscape' such as windmills to reinforce the argument that people won't like piles of WEEE, but it is not explained fully as some people think windmills are useless & are not relevant to the conclusion.

(Total for Question 27 = 7 marks)

includes 3 marks for Quality of Written Communication



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This answer gains two marks for correctly identifying ...the fact that WEEE is growing three times faster...

A further mark was awarded for using more than one example of evidence from the source.

An earlier question has already signalled that the source contains an argument by analogy, so no mark was awarded simply for stating that an analogy was used. However, this answer gains a fourth mark for pointing out that analogy is often a weak form of argument.

This answer was awarded three marks for *Quality of Written Communication*.

27 The source includes different types of evidence.

Assess the strengths and weaknesses of these different types of evidence, using examples from the source.

Evidence is used to support a point / theory / ^{argument}. The text includes statistics, such as UK produces approximately 1 million tonnes of WEE each year. This helps to ensure reliability and ~~stuff~~ is a fact. ~~The text also provides evidence that~~ Facts are usually correct and specific. The text also includes a ^{rule} ~~law~~, which obliges the UK to collect a minimum of 4kg of WEEE per person per year. This is good because it highlights what actions are in place in order to solve this problem. ~~However~~ However a problem with this is that ~~people may not take the necessary~~

with this is that people may not oblige and may go over the expected amount. You cannot always ensure that people will follow rules.

~~Another fact in the text is that some evidence~~

Some evidence includes opinion, as the author believes that burying our waste will leave problems for the future. Opinions are not reliable or true, because everyone has their own unique interpretation on a particular topic. It is subjective, meaning opinions differ between, within societies and over time. However this opinion is supported by statistics and hard fact.

(Total for Question 27 = 7 marks)

includes 3 marks for Quality of Written Communication



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This answer has gained four marks for correctly identifying one piece of evidence as fact and another piece of evidence as opinion. This answer was awarded three marks for *Quality of Written Communication*.

Question 28

Most candidates were able to gain three or more marks for this question. However, the number gaining the maximum five marks for content was limited because the assessment of methods of disposal of WEEE was limited to reproducing or paraphrasing material from the source.

28 The author discusses a number of different methods for dealing with WEEE. Identify two of these different methods and assess their relative advantages and disadvantages.

One method is to bury the waste WEEE. An advantage of this is that it means that once the equipment is buried and gone, it is no longer our problem - so it is simple and easy. However, as the writer argues, it is expensive and timely to then have to clear these areas, so it would be unfair to leave this mess/problem for the future generations. Also, landfill sites are at risk from contamination from hazardous materials found in WEEE, e.g. mercury, ~~therefore~~ this would cause an even bigger problem than the first problem about how to dispose of the waste, therefore landfill sites are not the correct option to deal with disposing of WEEE.

Another method is to recycle the equipment. This would involve the metal being used again, which is an advantage as it creates less waste. Also money can be made from selling scrap metal, such as copper. However recycling also can cause problems, such as whether it is advantageous to manually recycle the equipment, or is it uneconomic. Furthermore, there are disadvantages to be considered such as if toxins were released - again this could cause a bigger problem than the one which is trying to be solved.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This answer correctly identifies burial and recycling as two methods for disposing of WEEE, gaining two marks.

A further mark was awarded for paraphrasing some of the evidence from the source to discuss advantages and disadvantages of the two methods.

However, the answer does not include any material which is not from the source and so is limited to three marks for content.

This answer was awarded three marks for *Quality of Written Communication*.

28 The author discusses a number of different methods for dealing with WEEE. Identify two of these different methods and assess their relative advantages and disadvantages.

~~They suggest~~ They suggest either leaving them in landfills or recycling them. ~~First~~ The advantages of leaving them in a landfill is that it is easier. Also it could be cheaper as sometimes you have to pay to recycle. The disadvantages of this are that it is an eyesore. Also it leaves problems for future generations such as chemicals and non-biodegradable things. If you were to recycle them it would be saving the planets finite resources. Also ~~from~~ the parts can be used again so it makes production costs cheaper. Also it stops landfills being eyesores and the production of harmful chemicals from non biodegradable things. However recycling can be boring. Also people might forget to do it. Or they might just fly tip as they couldn't be bothered to go to a recycling tip.



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Examiner Comments

This answer correctly identifies land-fill and recycling for two marks, paraphrases some of the supporting evidence from the source for a further mark, and gains two more marks for suggesting that land-fill is an eyesore and also that recycling is ...saving the planets finite resources.... Neither of these two points appear in the source material.

This answer was awarded two marks for *Quality of Written Communication*.

Question 29

Almost all candidates were able to make relevant comments on the suggestion that *...we should stop funding the development of new treatments and instead spend all available money on treating patients.*

Some answers, which simply stated the need to spend all money on treatment because *people have a right to life*, gained few marks. Better answers commented on the fact that all existing treatments had to be developed at some time and would not exist if money had only been spent on treatment in the past.

Some candidates went on to consider whether we should spend more on research and development because improved drugs and treatments can often reduce expenditure. Conditions can be cured rather than requiring continuous treatment.

Some outstanding answers also presented differing ethical arguments, for example from a utilitarian or Kantian perspective.

Question 30

Almost all candidates were able to make relevant comments on the suggestion that *...arguments between creationists and evolutionists are futile because the two views are based on such fundamentally different approaches.*

A small number of candidates attempted to answer the question by focusing entirely on the nature of argument, without mentioning either creationism or evolution. Such answers gained very limited marks. Candidates who were able to describe some of the characteristics of evolution or creationism gained better marks.

The most complete answers included detailed descriptions of both the theory of evolution and creationism. They also presented arguments relating to the faith-based belief which underpins creationism, against the evidence supporting the theory of evolution.

A few candidates based some outstanding answers around "theistic evolution".

Paper Summary

Overall, the content of answers to questions requiring extended writing has improved since the previous series.

Section A

- For some of the multiple-choice questions in Section A you will not be certain of the correct answer. You can reduce the number of possible answers by first eliminating those you know to be wrong.

Section B

- In questions where you are asked to calculate an answer (eg Q21), you should always show how you have arrived at your answer. Even if your final answer is wrong, you may be awarded marks for correct working method.
- If the question specifies *...using your own knowledge...* or *...not in the source...* and you give an answer which **is** in the source, you will not receive any marks.
- If the question specifies *...from the source...* and you give an answer which is **not** in the source, you will not receive any marks, even if the answer is otherwise correct.
- If the question does not specify *...using your own knowledge...* or *...from the source...* an answer which uses both will achieve good marks.
- When you are asked to assess the strength of evidence (eg Q27) you can gain good marks by quoting and identifying particle pieces of evidence. If a particular type of argument has already been identified you may be able to gain marks by discussing whether that type of argument is strong or weak.
- When you are asked to assess the strength of evidence (eg Q27) you will not gain marks by simply giving your own opinion about the case which has been presented.

Section C

You can gain good marks for the essays by

- showing knowledge of the topic
- using this knowledge to present an argument.

Sections B and C

- *Quality of Written Communication* (QWC) is awarded for up to a maximum of 14 marks in Sections B and C.
- Where legibility affects the coherence of an answer marks you can lose marks, because the point which is being made is not clear.
- Read the questions carefully. You should make sure that you read and understand what the question is asking, so that you can be exact and specific in your response.

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