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Examiners' Report

June 2010

GCSE General Studies 6GS01

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June 2010

Publications Code US023933

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Introduction

Many candidates were able to attempt answers to all the questions on this paper within the time available. However, as in previous series, it was clear that some candidates had not managed their time well in relation to the marks available for different sections of the paper. Specifically, each of the essay questions in Section C carries as many marks as the whole of Section A. Candidates should be aware of this and should be guided to allocate their time and effort accordingly.

For a significant minority of candidates, poor Quality of Written Communication (QWC) lowered total marks. QWC marks were awarded for the two essay questions in Section C and also for the two longer answers required for questions in Section B (Q28 and 29). Candidates should be aware that approximately 15% of the marks available for the paper are awarded for QWC. Candidates should also be aware that QWC marks are awarded independently of marks awarded for content. A facetious or irrelevant answer will not gain marks for content or for QWC, but where a candidate makes an attempt to answer the question QWC marks may be awarded even no marks are given for content.

Many candidates would increase their marks if they spent more time thinking about what the questions required of them and producing a succinct answer, rather than trying to write down enough material to fill the spaces supplied.

Question 21

The majority of candidates gained a mark for this question. Where the mark was not awarded this was most commonly because figures had not been estimated from the bar chart with sufficient accuracy.

Question 22

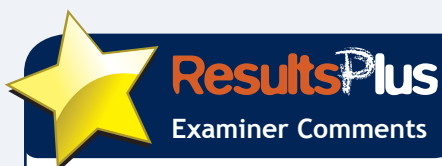
Many candidates gained one or more marks on this question. The majority of answers for a disadvantage correctly identified loss of accuracy. The advantages given were sometimes too vague to merit a mark.

22 Give one advantage and one disadvantage of presenting information in the form of a bar chart.

Advantage *The information is a lot easier to understand.*

Disadvantage *The information isn't displayed accurately.*

(Total for Question 22 = 2 marks)



Here the advantage answer does not gain a mark because it does not explain, in just a little more detail, why it is “..easier to understand...” for example by identifying trends more easily or being able to spot the highest or lowest amounts.

Question 23

This relatively easy question enabled the great majority of candidates to gain three marks.

23 (a) Identify three different renewable energy sources mentioned in the passage.

(2)

Wind Power

Wave Power

Rainfall

(b) Name one renewable energy source **not** mentioned in the passage.

(1)

Solar Power



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Examiner Comments

This candidate has lost one mark for identifying “rainfall” instead of hydroelectric power. Some candidates also lost marks for describing “sun power” rather than solar power.



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Examiner Tip

Use the correct scientific or technical words in describing things, especially when they are given in the text you are answering questions about.

Question 24

The majority of candidates were able to score two or three marks on this question, with a pleasingly large number correctly calculating the total power as 140GW, thus gaining the full 3 marks.

Where a question requires candidates to select and manipulate data, some marks will always be awarded for both selection and manipulation

24 Use the information in paragraph 3 to calculate the total electrical power produced in the UK.

700W = 5% of UK's electricity.

100% = $700 \times 20 = 14000 \text{ W}$.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate has correctly identified the relevant data but has miscopied the figure for power and so gains only one mark.



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Examiner Tip

If you are asked to do a calculation then marks will be given for identifying the correct data even if the calculation is not correct. Be careful not to lose marks by incorrectly copying figures, especially powers of ten eg 700 instead of 7000.

Question 25

An argument by analogy will always include some reference to the similarity between two different situations, in this case "...like (bold) the tunnel...". It is this phrase which gains the mark and candidates should be discouraged from copying out large sections from the passage.

Question 26(a)

Many candidates were able to identify overall reduction of carbon emissions as an objective of carbon offsetting, but a much smaller number were able to link this to the idea of reducing carbon emissions in one place to compensate for carbon emissions elsewhere

26 (a) What is meant by "carbon offsetting"?

(2)

Reducing the level of carbon emissions ~~by~~ in
the atmosphere and compensating for the amount
already there in cleaner energy sources.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate gains both marks for identifying the reduction of carbon emissions and also for linking this to the idea of compensation.

Question 26(b)

Many candidates were able to identify the planting of trees being used to offset eg carbon emissions during travel.

(b) Give an example of carbon offsetting **not** mentioned in the passage.

(1)

Planting more trees could help with carbon off setting



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Examiner Comments

Planting more trees was the most common response awarded a mark, although other responses were allowed if they clearly related to the idea of carbon offsetting.

Question 27

This question required candidates to link their knowledge about the intermittent nature of many renewables with the need for a supply of power which can be managed. Most candidates were unable to do this and sometimes described a pumped storage scheme as being able to supply more energy by releasing water than was required to pump the water uphill in the first place. The mark most commonly awarded was for identifying that the electricity used to pump water uphill could come from renewables.

27 Why might a pumped storage scheme which uses electricity to pump water uphill be useful when used together with many renewable energy sources?

~~When the water flows back down it has gravitational potential energy which can be used to turn generators/turbines to create more energy overall.~~

Renewable energy sources are not always reliable and can sometimes lead to a lack of power so using excess power to pump it uphill means that when there is a lack of energy it can be released and power produced.

(Total for Question 27 = 2 marks)



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Examiner Comments

This candidate has identified the intermittent nature of renewables and using power from renewables to pump water uphill for two marks.

Question 28

Most candidates were able to identify two or more advantages of the tidal barrage. Where candidates were unable to extend their answer beyond a simple statement such as "The tidal barrage will provide energy in known quantities but other renewables will not" marks were not awarded for assessment by comparison with other renewables.

28 Identify and assess the advantages that a tidal barrage has compared to other renewable energy sources.

The Tidal barrage "could supply 5% of our electricity" whereas none of the other schemes are that efficient. The Tidal barrage is ~~seen~~ estimated to give the same amount of electricity as a large conventional power station preventing us from using the power stations saving the environment. Also the tidal barrage would be a good carbon ~~offset~~ offsetter as in 6 months it would have compensated for the carbon emitted for construction. None of the other sources would be as quick to carbon offset. ~~Therefore~~ the tidal barrage could lead to economic regeneration in local communities and generate 7000 MW which is a lot of electrical power.

(Total for Question 28 = 8 marks)

includes 3 marks for Quality of Written Communication

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Examiner Comments

This candidate has correctly identified three advantages of a tidal barrage but has failed to assess them in comparison to other renewables. In fact no other renewables are mentioned in the answer. Two marks were awarded for QWC. The overall mark was 5 out of a possible 8 marks

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Examiner Tip

Identify the instructions contained in the question. Here, the instructions are to identify **and assess** - how are these different and what would your answer need to include to both identify and assess?

Question 29

This question required candidates to “..assess the strength or weakness of the evidence..”. Where candidates made general comments about the strength or weakness of the conclusion, as opposed to the strength or weakness of the evidence, marks were limited. Candidates who were able to identify evidence as fact or opinion, or commented on the weakness of arguments from analogy, often gained full marks. As in previous series, some candidates chose to give their own opinions rather than examining the evidence in the text.

29 The writer concludes by saying that “The sooner the barrage is built the better”.
Assess the strength or weakness of the evidence given to support this conclusion.

The strengths are that it would lead to economic regeneration in local communities, it would generate enough ~~energy~~ electricity during the first 6 months of operations to compensate for the carbon emitted during construction.

The weaknesses are that if the project cost £15 billion, the mudflats in Severn estuary will be destroyed which will have a big environmental impact.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate has made some general comments about strengths and weaknesses and related these to particular pieces of evidence, but has not done enough to gain more than two marks. Identifying the evidence about economic regeneration as weak because it is based on an argument by analogy would have increased the mark, as would identifying any relevant piece of information correctly as fact or opinion.

This candidate gained 4 marks in total, 2 marks for content and 2 for QWC



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Examiner Tip

If you are asked about the strength of evidence try to identify different pieces of evidence as based on fact or opinion.

Question 30

There are a number of ways of approaching this question, but most candidates chose to discuss science in relation to religion, sometimes in a very limited way. For example, some candidates argued that moral decisions should be based only on religious teachings. Answers which gave examples of differences between science and religion such as Darwin and evolution compared to creationism gained additional marks. Some candidates were able to link these examples to the different nature of scientific knowledge based on observation compared to religious belief based on faith. Some outstanding answers were based on a comprehensive analysis of changes in philosophy, science and religious beliefs since the time of Socrates.

30 There are questions that science cannot and should not answer. For example, science cannot tell us what is right or wrong or explain the meaning of life.

Discuss arguments for and against this point of view.

~~For as long as it has been around ~~humanity~~ humankind~~
 For as long as it has been around the human race
 constantly finds itself questioning everything around it.
 The thirst for knowledge has engulfed humans for
 centuries. Since ancient times man has always
 found ways of explaining certain events and justifying
 what it doesn't understand. Mankind once thought
 that earthquakes were a sign that the gods or
 God was angry, we now know that earthquakes
 occur due to tectonic plate movements, thanks to
 science. Science has allowed the human race to
 explain things based on logical theories not just
 blind faith or an instinct. Science has made many
 discoveries that have benefited mankind, this ranges
 from medicine to electric cookers and even computers.
 Science does not claim to know everything, otherwise
 it would stop, there are more questions waiting
 to be answered and science seems to be the best
 method of answering ~~these~~ ~~ones~~ them. Science has opened
 our minds to a variety of potential possibilities, and is
 still making new discoveries to this day.

However, there are some questions that science cannot answer, some believe that science shouldn't even try. ~~These are deep ones~~ These questions require a deeper level of thinking and have puzzled philosophers for centuries. These are questions like what is the meaning of life, how does mankind explain morality and what is the purpose of the universe. These questions have often been answered outside of science in the form of religion. Religion, no matter what kind or what god, has always been able to answer such questions because the answer is based in faith and belief, unlike science which requires logic. Because of this, science does not allow religions answer as most scientists acknowledge religion as outdated and invented as a way of explaining everything simply without logic. An example of a divide between science and religion would be the debate between evolution and creationism. Some people have been able to compromise, for example saying that God was responsible for evolution. Science may never give an answer to such questions, and if it does then that answer will not be accepted by all. One thing is for certain, the human race has, is and will, always find a way to explain what it doesn't understand. Perhaps it is because people fear what they don't understand or perhaps it is just human nature.

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Examiner Comments

This answer includes a good description of how both science and religion have attempted to answer questions about the world in which we live and our place in it. Science is described as based on logic but a better description would include some explanation of the scientific method, how it is applied and why there are limitations as to the questions which science can or cannot answer. The total score of 15 is considerably above the average of about 9. Marks awarded were A1, A3, A6, A7, A9, A10, A15, B1, B4, and B8 (3 marks) and QWC is 3 marks. Communication would have been improved by the use of paragraphs.

Question 31

Most candidates limited their answer to considering the benefits or disadvantages of CCTV with very little mention made of other uses of technology such as email monitoring, ID cards or the DNA database. Some limited answers did not go beyond stating that CCTV was a good thing because it helped to catch criminals. When deterrence was mentioned some consideration was often given to other effects such as criminal activity moving to areas where CCTV was less common. The threat to civil liberties was often linked to a "Big Brother" state but this was very rarely illustrated any further. Some very good answers attempted to discuss how possible it is to strike a balance between civil liberties and the fight against crime or terrorism.

31

Modern surveillance technology such as CCTV allows the state to track people's movement and activities to an unprecedented extent. Some argue that this can provide invaluable help in the fight against crime. Others say that civil liberties are threatened by the very measures intended to protect them.

Do the likely benefits of increased surveillance outweigh the possible disadvantages?

CCTV was introduced as a means to deter crime and help the police catch criminals, the number of CCTV cameras has steadily grown over the years since its introduction. This has caused some people to feel threatened, they argue that CCTV is invading their civil liberties. However supporters of CCTV say that it makes them feel safe.

Supporters of CCTV argue that it is an invaluable tool in the fight against crime. It can be used in different ways in different situations. Homeowners or shopkeepers can install CCTV on their property to deter would be criminals. Burglars and thieves are usually too scared to commit crimes where there are CCTV cameras. In this sense CCTV is a great form of home security, people may even buy fake CCTV cameras, which shows that their presence alone is enough to scare criminals. The police are now beginning to rely on CCTV more and more, due to technological advancements, the police can now track down suspects ~~on CCTV~~ ~~corner~~ by using the line feed from

CCTV cameras. The police still use CCTV ~~cameras~~ ~~that~~ footage on their recorded tapes to solve crimes. Police can see what was occurring in that area at a specific time and match it with the details of the crime. Another ~~one~~ benefit of CCTV is that due to its reliability, it can be given as evidence in court. Some CCTV cameras even go as far as stopping crime in the act. Certain crime hotspots are watched by CCTV cameras that relay the footage to a monitoring station where they can call the police, or stop the crime by using built-in speakers in the camera. CCTV is also helpful in crimes concerning groups of people, it is hard for the human eye to keep track of large amounts of people.

However there are people ~~that~~ ^{who} argue that CCTV is a threat to civil liberties and an invasion of privacy. The idea of being watched everyday at all times in all places is upsetting to the majority of the population. It has been coined that there is an emergence of a big brother state, in which the majority of the population are being watched by a small minority of powerful and influential people. The argument for CCTV can also go both ways, criminals can use CCTV to select their ~~or~~ as a

Police presence in the area, often organized gangs have CCTV on their territory. The issue of CCTV raises paranoia in some, some believe that it is just a small step in the direction of a ~~totalitarian~~ ^{authoritarian} state in which people have no civil liberties or are desperately trying to hold on to the few they have.

There is no denying that CCTV ~~is~~ helps to fight crime. It is an invaluable tool in the ongoing struggle against crime. Its advantages ~~that~~ outweigh its disadvantages. CCTV is helping in the fight against crime, this has been proved many a time, it will continue to do so even if some people remain silent.



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Examiner Comments

This answer is limited to considering the role of CCTV but does so reasonably comprehensively. Several examples are given of the different ways in which CCTV could be used by the police and others in the fight against crime. A discussion of other technologies might have enabled the candidate to make a more detailed consideration of the threats which some people perceive. However this answer still scores a total of 11 marks, marginally more than average. Marks awarded were A2, A3, A4, A5, A6, B3 and B8(2 marks) and QWC is 3 marks.

Appendix A: Statistics

6GS01: Challenges for Society

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	90	58	53	48	43	38
Uniform boundary mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

6GS02: The Individual in Society

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	90	60	54	49	44	39
Uniform boundary mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

6GS03: Change and Progress

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	90	57	52	48	44	40
Uniform boundary mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

6GS04: Beliefs, Values and Responsibilities

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	90	57	51	45	39	33
Uniform boundary mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

Maximum Mark (Raw): the mark corresponding to the sum total of the marks shown on the mark scheme.

Boundary Mark: the minimum mark required by a candidate to qualify for a given grade.

This candidate has lost one mark for identifying “rainfall” instead of hydroelectric power. Some candidates also lost marks for describing “sun power” rather than solar power.

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Order Code US023933 June 2010

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