

GCE 2005
January Series



Mark Scheme

Geography Specification A

GGA4 Advanced Level

Mark schemes are prepared by the Principal Examiner and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation meeting attended by all examiners and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation meeting ensures that the mark scheme covers the candidates' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for the standardisation meeting each examiner analyses a number of candidates' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed at the meeting and legislated for. If, after this meeting, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been discussed at the meeting they are required to refer these to the Principal Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of candidates' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

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General Guidance for A Level Geography Assistant Examiners

Quality of Written Language

As required by QCA, the marking scheme for this unit includes an overall assessment of quality of written communication. There are no discrete marks for the assessment of written communications but where questions are “Levels” marked, written communication will be assessed as one of the criteria within each level.

Level 1: Language is basic, descriptions and explanations are over simplified and lack clarity.

Level 2: Accurate and appropriate use of language; descriptions and explanations are expressed with clarity throughout.

Level 3: Accurate and appropriate use of language; descriptions and explanations are expressed with clarity throughout.

Levels marking – General Criteria

The following general criteria relate to knowledge, understanding and their critical application and the quality of written communication as outlined in the AQA Geography A subject specification. They are designed to assist examiners in determining into which band the quality of response should be placed, and should be used when assessing the level of response an answer has achieved. It is anticipated that candidates’ performances under the various dimensions will be broadly inter-related and the general guidelines for each level are as follows:

Level 1: An answer at this level is likely to:

- display a basic understanding of the topic;
- make one of two points without support of appropriate exemplification or application of principle;
- demonstrate a simplistic style of writing perhaps lacking close relation to the term of the question and unlikely to communicate complexity of subject matter;
- lack of organisation, relevance and specialist vocabulary;
- demonstrate deficiencies in legibility, spelling, grammar and punctuation, which detract from the clarity of meaning.

Level 2: An answer at this level is likely to:

- display a clear understanding of the topic;
- make one or two points with support of appropriate exemplification and/or application of principle;
- demonstrate a clear style of writing which clearly addresses the terms of the question;
- demonstrate a degree of organization and use of specialist vocabulary;
- demonstrate sufficient legibility, and quality of spelling, grammar and punctuation to communicate meaning clearly.

Level 3: An answer at this level is likely to:

- display a detailed understanding of the topic;
- make several points with support of appropriate exemplification and/or application of principle;
- demonstrate a sophisticated style of writing incorporating measured and qualified explanation and comment as required by the question and reflecting awareness of the complexity of subject matter and/or incompleteness/tentativeness of explanation;
- demonstrate a clear sense of purpose so that the responses are seen to closely relate to the requirements of the question with confident use of specialist vocabulary;
- demonstrate legibility of text, and qualities of spelling, grammar and punctuation, which contribute to complete clarity of meaning.

NB A perfect answer is not usually required for full marks. Clearly, it will be possible for an individual candidate to demonstrate variable performance between the levels. In such cases, the principle of best-fit should be applied. Experience suggests that the use of exemplars within this mark scheme and the discussion, which takes place during the Co-ordination Meeting normally, provides sufficient guidance on the use of levels in marking.

Annotation of Scripts

- Where an answer is marked using a levels of response scheme the examiner should annotate the script with a 'L1', 'L2' or L3 at the point where that level is thought to have been reached. The consequent mark should appear in the right-hand column. Where an answer fails to achieve Level 1, zero marks should be given.
- Where answers do not require levels of response marking, each script should be annotated to show that one tick equals one mark. It is helpful if the tick can be positioned in the part of the answer, which is thought to be credit-worthy.

General

It is important to recognise that many of the answers shown within this marking scheme are only exemplars. Where possible, the range of accepted responses is indicated, but because many questions are open-ended in their nature, alternative answers may be equally credit-worthy. The degree of acceptability is clarified through the Co-ordination Meeting and subsequently by telephone with the Team Leader as necessary.

Question 1

- (a) Response should show knowledge and understanding of the processes of erosion associated with the development of a wave cut platform. Credit statements on abrasion/corrosion, attrition, hydraulic impact, cavitation and solution (1-3 for each process depending on detail/development). Allow reference to sub-aerial erosion if valid. There must be more than a mere mention of a process to attract credit so that a list is not creditworthy. There are varying ways to full marks (1+1+1+1, 1+2+1, 2+2, 1+3) but at least two processes must be outlined for 4 marks. Statements about weathering are not creditable. Allow 1 mark for overview of erosion leading to formation of wave cut platform. **(4 marks)**
- (b) Response should show knowledge and understanding of relevant aspects of geology either lithology or structure or elements of both. Lithology - different types of rock susceptible to different types of erosion particularly distinguishing between chemical and physical erosion processes; also offering different resistance to erosion, affecting rates of erosion. (1-4 depending on detail/development). Structure might be at different scales but jointing and stratification into bedding planes allowing water ingress, presenting lines of weakness leading to differential erosion both in profile and plan form. (1-4 depending on detail/development). Concordant/discordant coastlines and associated patterns of coastal development (1-2). Both nature and effect should be outlined for 4 marks. Solution is acceptable as a form of erosion. **(4 marks)**
- (c) Response should show knowledge and understanding of wave cut platform processes and cliff retreat. At a simple level the standard model of development should be outlined referring to continuing cliff retreat with undercutting at the wave cut notch and slumping/collapse with gradual planation and extension of the platform and removal of the stumps and stacks. Development of beach material on the platform. Over time, an ever-extending wave cut platform means energy dissipation so that eventually cliff undercutting and retreat ceases and sub-aerial processes dominate with slope decline at the cliff.

Relevant exemplification, which contributes to illustration of points made, should be credited.

- Level 1** Generic Descriptor (1-3)
Simple understanding shown by straightforward statements about cliff retreat, extension of wave cut platform and removal of stacks, stumps.
- Level 2** Generic descriptor (4-5)
More refined understanding indicated by fuller statements with illustration and some detail on cliff retreat, extension of wave cut platform and removal of stacks, stumps, suggestions of gradual reduction in energy levels and diminution of marine processes. Full statement on how without reference to why.
- Level 3** Generic Descriptor (6-7)
Clear understanding of energy aspects with outline of cliff retreat extended by clear statements on energy dissipation, diminution of marine processes, dominance of sub-aerial processes and slope decline.

(7 marks)

Total for this Question: 15 marks

Question 2

- (a) Response should show an ability to describe a distribution illustrated on a map with appropriate geographical language. Summary statement noting uneven distributions with particular concentrations and absence of earthquakes/seismicity (1). Linearity, association with vulcanicity, (1-2 depending on detail and development). Statement about particular clusters, perhaps not part of linear pattern (1). Statement linking distribution to plate boundaries. (1) Concentration on continental margins/coasts (1). Precise references to locations as examples of valid observations (1).
(4 marks)
- (b) Response should show knowledge and understanding of causes of seismicity and particularly its relationship with tectonic plates and margins. A brief outline of plate tectonics, plate movement with some emphasis on seismic events and processes at plate boundaries is creditable (1-3 depending on detail and development). Alternatively/additionally, some attempt at distinctions between different plate boundaries and the varying nature/frequency of earthquakes is creditable when supported by a general statement on the relationship between earthquakes and plate margins. (1-3 depending on detail and development). Explanation of non-plate margin earthquakes e.g. related to local tectonic factors, former plate margins etc (1-2). Vulcanicity causing local seismicity (1).
(4 marks)
- (c) Response should show knowledge and understanding of the nature of at least two different types of plate boundaries as they relate to landforms; constructive margins whether submarine or on land; destructive/subduction/collision margins; conservative margins. A flexible view of landforms should be taken so that they might include mid-oceanic ridges, volcanic island arcs, ocean trenches, young fold mountains, rift valleys, major volcanoes and volcanic clusters (different types of volcanoes are creditable as different landforms). Relic features such as mountain ranges e.g. of Caledonian era, associated with former plate boundaries as opposed to contemporary plate boundaries are perfectly creditable. Batholiths and other intrusive features are creditable if clearly related to landforms. A key feature of a good response will be matching the character of the plate boundary to the nature of the landform, purposefully demonstrating contrasts between them (or even perhaps querying the distinctions).

Relevant exemplification, which contributes to illustration of points made, should be credited.

- Level 1** Generic Descriptor (1-3)
Simple outline of plate tectonics with significance of plate boundaries and associated processes. One boundary only.
- Level 2** Generic Descriptor (4-5)
At least two boundaries referred to. More detailed outline of plate tectonics with significance of plate boundaries and associated processes with clear link made between landforms. Sense of discussion becoming evident.
- Level 3** Generic Descriptor (6-7)
Clear understanding of extent of link between at least two landforms and two plate boundaries and associated processes. Clear sense of discussion ideally with expression of measured view on “to what extent ...”.

(7 marks)

Total for this question: 15 marks

Question 3

- (a) Response should indicate an ability to interpret this rose diagram and accurately convey the information shown. It might refer to the general pattern of orientation either NE/SW or SW/NE (1-2) to a modal class at about 60-240 degrees (1) to the presence of residuals which don't correspond with the general trend (1). Reference to precise values in the data set (1).
(4 marks)
- (b) Response should show knowledge and understanding of the glacial till as unsorted matrix of varying calibre and composition of predominantly angular materials transported by glaciers/ice sheets carried and deposited in rough alignment with the direction movement and therefore deposited in similar alignment. Therefore, the alignment as indicated on the diagram for example indicates the direction of movement of ice. (1-4 depending on detail and development). Additionally/alternatively, the geological composition of the material indicates the source of the ice from which direction of movement can be inferred. (1-4 depending on detail and development). Uncertainty of from NE or SW (1). Alignment of till features such as drumlins (1).
Detail and development may well include accurate exemplification purposefully used.
(4 marks)
- (c) Response should show knowledge and understanding of the form and character of glacial compared with fluvio-glacial features (unsorted-sorted, unstratified-stratified, less uniform/more uniform, larger/smaller, angular/rounded) perhaps with observations about their form (and related distribution) depending on the landforms chosen e.g. different types of moraines, erratic, clustering of drumlins, linearity of kames, varves, outwash plains etc. The explanation lies in the transport in glacial streams or not of glacier load and its sorting, rounding and stratification by the varying energy conditions and in the pattern of deposition by linear flowing sub/englacial meltwater streams compared with the more widely diffused pattern of glacier flow and related deposition. Clearly, the account should accurately relate to the chosen features and there should be a clear element of making a contrast.

Relevant exemplification, which contributes to illustration of points made, should be credited.

Level 1	Generic Descriptor (1-3) Simple of two relevant landforms perhaps on a side-by-side basis. Perhaps emphasis on form OR character. More detail on one landform only.
Level 2	Generic Descriptor (4-5) More detailed account of two relevant landforms with sense of contrasts being identified. This level could be achieved for account of form or character.
Level 3	Generic Descriptor (6-7) Clear understanding of two relevant landforms with focus on contrasting explanation. Needs both form and character for Level 3 and form of both for 7 marks.

(7 marks)

Total for this Question: 15 marks

Mark Scheme for Synoptic Essays

Preamble

Examiners should bear in mind that these questions are synoptic in nature and offer candidates the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and understanding:

1. across a range of geographical subject matter;
2. of connections between the different aspects of geography in the specification;
3. of the importance, where relevant, of human perspectives on themes and issues.

Candidates are advised of this both in the Assessment Unit Rubric and in the Note to Candidate, which precedes the essay questions in Section B. Synoptic elements might therefore feature in answers matching all the criteria bands but can be expected to feature more prominently in higher mark bands. It will be seen that explicit synoptic content is a necessary feature of the two band ranges 19-24 and 25-30.

Additionally, essay writing is an important vehicle for the demonstration of communication skills – at level 3 these refer to writing in a manner appropriate to purpose and complex subject matter; organising relevant information clearly and coherently using specialist vocabulary as appropriate and ensuring clarity of meaning through legible text, accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar. (Key Skills – Communication Level 3 C3.3 [QCA]; Para. 13 AS/A Level Geography Specification Outlines [QCA].

Synoptic content and communication aspects should be kept in mind when assessing the unit and are incorporated into the criteria bands set out below which refer to knowledge, understanding and skills. Indicate synoptic content using the letter ‘s’ in the margin as appropriate.

CRITERIA BANDS

Examiners will use the criteria below to evaluate the work, placing the candidate’s performance in the appropriate band and attributing the mark from the left-hand column appropriate to the question concerned. They should seek the best fit from the band descriptor – work adjudged to be in a particular band might not contain all the features attributed to that band.

25 – 30

A very good answer. Consistently relevant to the theme and to the demands of the question. Evaluates explicitly where required. Displays a very confident range of knowledge and understanding by using the appropriate terminology, critically referring to concepts and theory where necessary and establishing relationships between different physical and/or human factors and processes. Synoptic elements are a prominent feature and are fully integrated into the answer and used to purposeful effect in respect of the question’s requirements. Demonstrates, where relevant, either implicitly or explicitly awareness of human perspectives upon geographical themes and issues. Argues coherently and in an organized, logical and balanced fashion. Support is consistent, accurate and detailed. A well developed essay style. Detailed and sophisticated communication skills with fluent and cogent writing style.

19 – 24

A good answer, which remains relevant to the theme and demands of the question. Evaluation may now only be implicit. Displays a confident range of knowledge and understanding, but with a few omissions at the lower end, e.g. some terminology missing or some pertinent relationships left unexplored. Synoptic elements should be a feature of the answer and seen to be meeting the questions requirements. Some possibly rather uncritical reference to theory; some reference to awareness of human perspectives and decisions taking on geographical issues and problems. Argues well, but organisation may be suspect in places. Support is invariably there, but may not always be detailed. A competent essay style. Effective communication skills with accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar.

13 – 18

A satisfactory answer ranging down to the mediocre, which always attempts, but not always succeeds to be relevant. Lacking in evaluation. Displays a reasonable grasp of knowledge, but understanding is suspect in places. Relevant theory and concepts might be mentioned but with basic uncritical application. The interconnections and relationships between different physical and/or human processes are briefly mentioned but understanding of their significance is limited. There is some synoptic content, which is relevant to the question. Argument and analysis are partial and become less significant in relation to mere description. Increasingly unbalanced as an answer, and the logic and organisation are clearly deficient. Support is not detailed here, occasionally inaccurate and barely consistent. The bare bones of an essay format. Appropriate communication skills so that meaning is almost invariably clear with adequate language skills. Possibly some spelling/punctuation/grammar errors.

7 – 12

A very mediocre answer, which is only occasionally relevant to both the theme and the demands of the question. Decidedly deficient in knowledge and understanding with only simplistic notion of relevant theory and concepts. Little if any relevance to inter-relationships between physical and/or human processes and factors or subject matter from other elements in the specification. Increasing irrelevance in a predominantly descriptive context. Clearly lacks an ability to organise material and may drift into another answer. Support is scanty and usually suspect. A weak, barely perceptible, essay format. Basic communication skills – many spelling errors and/or oddities of grammar and punctuation.

1 – 6

A very weak answer, which shows little attempt to follow the theme and the demands of the question. A very low level of knowledge and understanding, with even the simplest of concepts avoided. Very inaccurate and may completely miss the point. No idea of how to organise material with haphazard format, evidence of guesswork and little or no support. No attempt at an essay format. Little or no language and communication skills. Many errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Question 4

Discuss why coasts are the focus of so much management

This question is intended to enable candidates to engage in broad human and physical geographical themes represented elsewhere in the specification (and quite possibly and creditably from outside the specification as well) from a *Coast processes and problems* specialisation. It should enable the introduction and elaboration of such human and physical geographical themes and allow for the human environment relationship to be explored. The response can be exemplified and illustrated at a variety of scale and contexts and the assigned task enables a discussion of values and policy aspects to be incorporated.

See generic scheme for criteria band - examiners are reminded that clear synoptic content is required for credit of 19 and over. However, it is difficult to imagine an answer of reasonable quality without some synoptic content.

Appropriate content might encompass a very broad range, as this is a question to which there are very many potentially relevant responses:

The impact of natural processes on coasts and human attempts to manage them can be expected to figure prominently in most responses and will be perfectly creditable. A range of different processes for example marine, atmospheric processes and their problematic impacts to include coastal erosion, sudden geomorphological events such as land slips, storm events including surges, flooding might be reviewed with the possible human responses designed to alleviate, reduce or remove the risk. Potential for different scales of response could well be a focus on management for a variety of reasons, flood prevention, control of erosion, maintenance of coastal forms, environmental conservation, navigation and so on. Such elements in a response could extend back into review of vulnerability of coasts to environmental threat. References to prospective or beginnings of sea level change associated with global warming and/or isostatic adjustment are potentially relevant but should be suitable measured and relate to the present or very near future i.e. not outline reasons for future management 10 or more years hence. Also creditable is content which demonstrates that management/intervention tends to prompt further management e.g. because of unforeseen effects elsewhere. Exemplification at different scale is possible from local to regional and small scale to national such as the Dutch coast.

A review of coasts as advantageous for occupation and economic development noting coastal concentrations of populations, general advantage of coastal locations for a variety of human activities to include accessibility, climatic advantages and so on might be used to demonstrate the need and desire by populations to manage them for their own purposes is certainly relevant and could powerfully contribute to synopticity. Such content may well creditable extend into more detailed consideration of one or more distinct economic activities such as heavy manufacturing, port activities, trade and tourism, perhaps some concentration on the latter can be expected and tolerated. One or more of these accurately reviewed with appropriate exemplification could provide a substantial response.

Content which queries the proposition I.e. that overall coasts aren't managed that much when placed in wider national/global context is certainly creditable where it forms part of a discussion.

Case study material/ exemplars might come from anywhere and synopticity will be indicated by wider reference to varying settings and human activities in coastal settings. In offering valid comparisons and contrasts, which inform a response and give it substance and credibility the potential of making broad and specific comparisons between perhaps LEDCs and MEDCs or contrasting environments presenting different management challenges and responses. Contrasting examples are extremely likely to produce synopticity etc.

A descriptive case study or series of examples of coastal management with no explicit relationship to the question but from which an answer may be inferred is unlikely to achieve more than 15 marks. Such a response with concluding paragraph, which refers clearly and explicitly to the terms of the question, and some reason(s) why coasts are indeed the focus of so much activity may achieve 18 marks.

The question clearly requires a reasoned and discussive approach and the response should come to a clear conclusion perhaps summarising the reasons or even querying the statement - any conclusion is creditable as long as it is reasonable and related to the preceding contents and discussion.

Question 5**To what extent are the impacts of geomorphological hazards distributed evenly across the globe?**

This question is intended to enable candidates to engage in broad human and physical geographical themes represented elsewhere in the specification and quite possibly and creditably from outside the specification as well from a Geomorphological processes and hazards specialisation. It should enable the introduction and elaboration of such human and physical geographical themes and allow for the human environment relationship to be explored. The response can be exemplified and illustrated at a variety of scales and contexts and the assigned task enables a discussion of values and policy aspects to be incorporated.

See generic scheme for criteria band - examiners are reminded that clear synoptic content is required for credit of 19 and over. However, it is difficult to imagine an answer of reasonable quality without some synoptic content.

Appropriate content might include: review of different types of processes and the extent to which they constitute hazards. Equally, the notion of hazards and their perception might also contribute a platform for a relevant discussion. Hazards identified in the specification i.e. seismicity, vulcanicity, weathering and mass movement are obviously creditable but so too are those geomorphological hazards which are not e.g. coastal erosion, flooding, fluvial processes including flooding and in some ways would constitute synoptic content.

Localised/regionalised nature of such events should be identified, depending on what hazards are chosen. The question invites comment on the possibilities of global impacts given large enough regional events such as major volcanic eruptions such as Krakatoa. It also allows for a focus on impacts, which relate the susceptibility of different parts of the world depending on natural environmental conditions. This depends on frequency, severity, notions of return periods and so on and the human and physical characteristics of the environment/location affected by the hazard. This might relate to the location of plate boundaries or different types of plate boundaries.

The potential to adapt to the various processes is relevant and persuasive, and measured analysis and comment on adaptability to hazards such as seismicity and vulcanicity should be fully credited. In addition, weathering and mass-movement is also capable of some adjustment and comments to these effects should be credited, as long as referred back to the terms of the question, and in particular to spatial variations in the capacity to adapt and manage linked with levels of development, technical capacity, types of economy and cultural disposition. Reference to some environments attracting people for their particular advantages is creditable where it supports the view that impacts are not evenly spread but such accounts should not lapse into the vulcanicity as providing resources rather than hazards.

Case study material/exemplars might come from anywhere. In offering valid comparisons and contrasts which inform a response and give it substance and credibility the potential of making broad and specific comparisons between, for example LEDCs and MEDCs, are extremely likely to produce synopticity etc. Synopticity will be further signified by reference to different types of setting - rural/urban, agricultural/industrial, coast/interior, climatic type, biome.

At least two hazards should be covered to access the 25-30 band; one hazard very well done can access 19-24 band. A descriptive case study or series of examples of geomorphological hazards with no explicit relationship to the question but from which an answer may be inferred is unlikely to achieve more than 15 marks. Such a response with concluding paragraph, which refers clearly and explicitly to the terms of the question and expresses a view on the evenness of hazard impact may achieve 18 marks.

The question clearly requires a discussion approach and the response should come to a view on “to what extent...” - any conclusion is creditable as long as it is reasonable and related to the preceding contents and discussion.

Question 6

Cold environments have little value except as sources of awe and wonder for adventurous tourists. How far do you agree with this view?

This question is intended to enable candidates to engage in broad human and physical geographical themes represented elsewhere in the specification and quite possibly and creditably from outside the specification as well from a Cold Environments and Human Activity specialisation. It should enable the introduction and elaboration of such human and physical geographical themes and allow for the human environment relationship to be explored. The response can be exemplified and illustrated at a variety of scales and contexts and the assigned task enables a discussion of values and policy aspects to be incorporated.

See generic scheme for criteria band - examiners are reminded that clear synoptic content is required for credit of 19 and over. However, it is difficult to imagine an answer of reasonable quality without some synoptic content.

Appropriate content might include:

Review of the nature of cold environments and their locational characteristics. Those that are identified in the specification include upland environments in Great Britain such as Snowdonia (and Northwest Highlands) and these are legitimate and creditable settings.

Resource distributions, resource development and associated economic activity - scope for review depending on focus – raw materials (energy, minerals), forestry, fisheries, tourism along with the extent to which each of these activities is constrained by environmental and possibly locational characteristics and the extent to which the environment is fragile and vulnerable to development processes.

The notion of value might be explored particularly in terms of populations and societies concerned with cold environments. Distinctions might be drawn between indigenous and adventitious populations, between those who occupy them and those who visit them - or even unable to visit them. A broader view of the value of unoccupied, sparsely populated territories in a wider global setting might also be taken e.g. that these characteristics of cold environments are worth conserving for their own sake or perhaps as a source of scientific knowledge and understanding and is perfectly creditable.

Some concentration on tourism in particular can be expected and is to be tolerated; we can also expect some tendency to agree with the proposition but the response must clearly move into other activities to access the good band 19-24. Responses may legitimately query tourism as a source of value if it is not sustainable. The idea of sustainable development as necessary for value in the long run is certainly creditable (and indeed clearly synoptic).

A descriptive case study or series of examples of cold environments with reference to tourism and at least one other activity having no explicit relationship to the question but from which an answer may be inferred is unlikely to achieve more than 15 marks. Such a response with concluding paragraph, which refers clearly and explicitly to the terms of the question and expresses a view on the value of cold environments may achieve 18 marks.

Case study material/exemplars might come from anywhere. In offering valid comparisons and contrasts as for example between LEDCs and MEDCs or perhaps more likely between different types of cold environment they will support and inform a response and give it substance and credibility and certainly contribute to synopticity etc.

The question clearly requires a discussion approach and the response candidate should come to a view - any conclusion is creditable as long as it is reasonable and related to the preceding contents and discussion. Ideally, it should clearly relate to the “how far do you agree.....?” element of the set question.