

Examiners' Report

June 2014

GCSE Geography A 5GA1H 01

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Introduction

As in previous series, this paper demonstrated a variety of responses ranging from very weak to extremely strong. Excellent case-study knowledge (which was focused on the questions set) saw generally high marks for many candidates in the last section of the paper. Importantly however, this had to be combined with a response which actually answered the question, e.g. "discuss" which was a strengthened command on this part of the paper combined with a 9 mark allocation. In marked contrast, Section A, once again, revealed patchy skills with OS map skills especially weak. Competency in understanding the relevance of GIS and its application to flooding were also notably absent from many responses (Question 3). Many candidates also seemed surprised by the need to revisit the OS map for Question 4(c) and it was worrying to note the lack of appreciation that most of the map contained low lying flat land at risk from flooding. Map skills were often quite poor even from candidates who did well on the rest of the paper.

As is often the case, the greatest discriminator was often a lack of clarity about what to do, with command words too often ignored and problems of scale and context all too apparent when looking at the map extract.

Once again, there were a few candidates who looked as if they may have run out of time since there were some blank responses on occasion towards the end of the paper. In this year's exam, Question 5(b) had a very high mark allocation (9 + 4) so it should have been attempted if at all possible. Please remember to advise candidates that they really should only need to use the answer-space provided, and not over-write.

This was the third examination series since the introduction of SPaG. Please remember that the 4 SPaG marks are based both on the technical quality of written communication, e.g. sentence structure, full-stops, capitals as well as the complexity of writing and the use of technical geographical language and / or complex terms. A candidate who scores zero marks for the answer, i.e. it is incorrect, would normally be given zero marks for SPaG since there is a requirement to write in the "context of the demands of the question".

Question 1 (a) (i)

Compass skills are key to this part of the examination, yet there were a number of candidates who were unable to link the map to the ground evidence from the photograph. This is clearly a skill that needs continual practice from Year 7 upwards.

Answer ALL questions in this section

- 1 (a) Study the Ordnance Survey (OS) map extract and Figure 1 in the Resource Booklet.

- (i) Figure 1 shows a photograph taken from the summit of Brent Knoll (341509).

In which **compass direction** is the camera pointing and what is the **evidence** for this?

(2)

Compass direction ~~east~~ west

Evidence you can see the sea and the settlement in front of it
There is also a church to the west



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Examiner Comments

This is a succinct response that contains enough detail in terms of evidence (sea, settlement etc.) to get the second mark. Note that only one piece of evidence is required for the second mark so there is no need to provide more.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Basic map skills and a general awareness of place and how to use evidence from a map resource are really very important in Section A. However, many candidates seem to be ill-equipped in terms of these skills.

Question 1 (a) (ii)

"Pattern" in this question caused some confusion for candidates. This type of instruction (or "carrier") has a particular meaning in geography and candidates must be made aware of it as part of the normal teaching and learning. It is clear that many candidates were not familiar with this instruction.

(ii) Describe the **pattern** of roads in the area to the south of Mark (3747) and north of the River Brue (3844).

(2)

There are a few narrow roads with passing places and the roads are generally less than 4m wide. The roads that are less than 4m wide all run/end up heading towards the same road with three going down



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This was regrettably typical of this question - a description of the width of the road and nothing about pattern. There were no marks for this response.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Candidates need to practice the language of pattern and distribution.

(ii) Describe the **pattern** of roads in the area to the south of Mark (3747) and north of the River Brue (3844).

(2)

The 3 roads are parallel heading North to South. There are two roads heading East-West above and below which forms a grid shape.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

In this response there is good identification of "grid shape" which gets a mark, as does the direction of the roads, i.e. north to south etc. 2 marks were awarded.

Question 1 (b)

Once again there was confusion over the meaning of site and situation (refer to the mark scheme for a definition). Many candidates ended-up writing about the human geography of its site rather than the area around the settlement (its situation and proximity to other places for example). Land use was generally better understood, but was often given in the context of within the settlement, rather than around the area of Burtle.

(b) Burtle is a small village in the south east of the map extract (3943). Describe the **situation** and **land use** of the area around Burtle.

(4)

~~It~~ it is situated east of chilton moor and west of the village west hay. It is on very flat land and close to huntspill river. It can be accessed mainly from two main roads, one from edlington heath in the south and one from westhay ~~to~~ in the east. The land use is farmland, for example ~~the~~ Hurst farm in square 3844 on the map. There is also a nature reserve.



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Examiner Comments

This response makes clear reference to both situation and land use. It was awarded full marks.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Practice answering questions which ask for both site and situation.

(b) Burtle is a small village in the south east of the map extract (3943). Describe the **situation** and **land use** of the area around Burtle.

(4)

Burtle is situated on The Huntspill River. It is approximately 5 km South of Blackford. The ~~the~~ M5 can be located approximately 7 km to the West. Burtle is very rural. It is surrounded by mostly farmland (Hurst Farm to the West) with very small patches of non-coniferous woodland. There is a nature reserve to the South (404416).



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Examiner Comments

This is a strong response which was awarded 4 marks. It covers both situation and land use, plus it uses good map evidence to support the answer.

Question 1 (c)

Overall candidates answered this question well with most having a good understanding of key terms such as linear and nucleated. Most candidates also developed their ideas with further description such as "houses along the road". A few candidates however, did not seem to understand the question and instead described the land use around the two settlements.

(c) Compare the **shape** of the two settlements: East Huntspill (3445) and Wedmore (4347).

(3)

East Huntspill is a linear settlement with buildings along the road B3141. Wedmore is a nucleated settlement, with lots of buildings packed together around cross roads.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This is a concise response using good geographical terminology. There is development for both Wedmore and East Huntspill. Comparison is implied through the answer. 3 marks were awarded.

(c) Compare the **shape** of the two settlements: East Huntspill (3445) and Wedmore (4347).

(3)

East Huntspill is a linear settlement because it is built around one road whereas Wedmore is nucleated because it is built around crossroads. Wedmore has a greater relief of land than East Huntspill.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

Another 3 mark response, but the last sentence is irrelevant. This unfortunately would have just wasted time for the candidate.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Encourage candidates to self-mark as they are writing their responses. There is no need to fill up all the white space provided as long as there is sufficient development through what has been written.

Question 2 (a)

There were some excellent descriptions in answers to this question, with clear command and control over comparative language, e.g. "however" and "whereas". However, some candidates drifted off into an explanation of why there were differences which clearly was not part of the question. A few candidates just compared the totals of each age group, 63 (51-65) vs 30 (over 60). This again was not rewarded with credit since the question was asking candidates to look at differences in activities only.

2 Study Figure 2 in the Resource Booklet.

- (a) Using data, compare the activities of visitors to Burnham-on-Sea aged 51-65 with those aged over 65.

(3)

The most popular activity of 51-65 years olds in Burnham is dog walking with 42 visitors doing it in comparison to over 65's 8. No body between 51-65 was visiting friends in Burnham, but it is the most popular activity with over 65s, with 10 doing it. Least popular with over 65s is jogging and sightseeing both with 6



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Examiner Comments

This response was awarded all 3 marks; the candidate has used data and clear comparison from the 51-65 and over 65 age groups.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Candidates should always be encouraged to use numbers from the resource when tackling questions such as these. They should also practice writing responses in a succinct style and using comparative language wherever possible.

2 Study Figure 2 in the Resource Booklet.

- (a) Using data, compare the activities of visitors to Burnham-on-Sea aged 51-65 with those aged over 65.

(3)

Physical activities such as dog walking or jogging is considerably lower for over 65s compared to 51-65 years. However socialising by visiting friends is higher for over 65s. overall there is ^{twice} more activity for 51-65 years old compared to over 65s



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This response has been limited to 2 marks since there is no explicit reference to the data provided between the age groups and activities. The last sentence is not relevant to the question.

Question 2 (b)

Many candidates misinterpreted this question and rather than describe a limitation they described what the data was showing them.

However, the majority of candidates who correctly understood the question managed to get 2 marks with good answers including responses such as the size of the sample or the fact that the survey was just carried out on one day.

(b) Suggest **one** possible limitation when reaching conclusions using this survey data.

(2)

One limitation is that it seems that the number of people from each category is different. For example, ~~63~~ 63 of 51-65 yr olds and just 30 over 65's. This means the results found may be unfair because there isn't an equal representation of the whole population.

(Total for Question 2 = 5 marks)



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Examiner Comments

There were a number of responses, such as this one, which were given 2 marks for recognising that there were differences in the numbers of people in each age category. Examiners were pleased to see comments, for example in the last sentence of this response, which provided ideas about bias and unreliability.

Question 3

It was disappointing to see how many responses were often very generalised with no detail in terms of research sources other than "use the internet".

Most had ideas that you could use the internet to get some sort of information but lacked clarity of what and where you got the information from i.e. The Met Office, BBC or Local News etc. Research skills are clearly an area that could be much improved.

There was also evidence of a few candidates using the resource to support them in their ideas, e.g. getting flood information from the Environment Agency.

In the specification it is clear that GIS is important, but unfortunately many candidates have a very narrow view as to the purpose and significance of GIS and presumably have had little exposure at school to the technology.

*3 Study Figures 3a and 3b in the Resource booklet.

Explain how you would use the internet and GIS (Geographical Information Systems) to investigate flood risk and its impacts.

You could use a system like Google Earth to layer maps of flooding from recent years to show which areas are most affected by flooding. This ~~also~~ ^{could also show} ~~highlights~~ the type of land use in high risk areas to see where the biggest impacts on housing and facilities are. The internet could be used to look up newspaper reports of past flooding to ~~an~~ look at impacts on people ~~and~~ and property. This would also show the areas that are ~~most~~ ^{most often} affected and therefore at higher risk. You could also use the internet to research data about rainfall to show which areas receive more rain and therefore have a higher risk of flooding. GIS could be used to show areas of different rock types as areas of impermeable rock are more likely to flood as there is more runoff, ~~and~~ into rivers so they are more likely to flood.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This is a very strong, clearly explained response which was awarded 6 marks. It is balanced and well linked to flood risk impacts. Good use of geographical terminology is demonstrated.

Question 4 (a) (i)

Most candidates were able to use the graph effectively to compare the two greenhouse gas futures provided. However, there were a number who did not get the maximum 3 marks since they failed to read off and extract any data and numbers from Figure 4.

- (i) Describe the **two** global greenhouse gas emission predictions from 2010–2020.

(3)

The 'better management' seems to take a less steep amount starting from 49 and finishing at around 52. The 'business as usual' seems to be very steep starting at 49 and finishing at 58 gigatonnes of CO₂.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This answer gained the maximum 3 marks for data and comparison. It is another example of a clear and succinct response.

- (i) Describe the **two** global greenhouse gas emission predictions from 2010–2020.

(3)

on figure 4
The red line shows how it is predicted that greenhouse gas emissions will increase constantly between 2010–2020. Whereas the blue line shows a more optimistic prediction that greenhouse gases will still increase but not as much as the red line predicts it will between 2010–2020.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This response shows clear comparison and description, but was restricted to 2 marks since there is no data provided from the graph.

Question 4 (a) (ii)

Candidates answered this question well with most using the examples of transport or increased energy usage with good links to global warming and with generally clear explanation.

(ii) Explain **one human** activity that contributes to climate change.

(3)

Using transport such as cars release greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide, sulphur dioxide or nitrous oxide. This can add to the atmosphere and warm up the earth, leading to climate change.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This is a succinct and clear response, gaining the maximum 3 marks available. The answer clearly shows aspects of explanation through the way in which it is written.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Note the question is one activity - some candidates wrote about two activities and were, as a result, less able to properly "explain" how it linked to climate change.

(ii) Explain **one human** activity that contributes to climate change.

(3)

One human activity is rearing of cattle. Because of the growing population, there is an increase on the demand of food. This means more cattle is being reared, ^{and} ~~which~~ they release methane gas. This methane gas is a greenhouse gas which traps the sun's heat. An increase in methane is contributing to global warming.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This is an example of another popular area that candidates wrote about - cattle and methane, due to the increasing demand for food. Again good development through explanation is demonstrated in this response. It was awarded all 3 marks.

Question 4 (b)

Many candidates gave global responses rather than local government ones. Kyoto was a very common answer, but it had to be linked to an individual government response to gain credit. Some of the best responses were those that included details about FITs and the Government's Green Deal scheme for better insulating properties.

(b) Describe **one** example of a government response to climate change.

(2)

The government are putting schemes in place such as the 'green deal'. This permits loans to people to buy renewable energy household resources such as loft insulation. This reduces the amount of energy ^{used} ~~use~~, and is very encouraging as ^{the loan} ~~it~~ can be paid ^{off} ~~at~~ their own time.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This answer gives a good example of a UK Government response to climate change. The description is well developed so 2 marks were awarded.

Question 4 (c)

A large number of candidates wrote about flood risk in Highbridge itself or at the coast (to the west), rather than about the area to the east which was part of the question. Unfortunately these candidates would not have been awarded any marks.

It is worrying how many candidates are unaware of the projected sea level rise. The latest IPPC Report AR establishes that sea level rise is likely, at a maximum, to be in the order of around 1m (not the 10s or 100s of metres that some candidates wrote about). Other candidates didn't make the connection to the fact that as this area was very low lying it would not just be coastal areas that would flood, but in fact many parts of the map extract would be at risk. Candidates should be reminded that it is always good practice, in a question such as this, to use grid references (6 or 4 figure) to provide clear evidence, otherwise answers can be simply too generalised. It is good to see that some candidates made interesting connections between sea level rise and rates of coastal erosion putting areas at risk, but the question was specifically about the area east of Burnham.

(c) Study the OS map extract of the area to the east of Burnham-on-Sea.

Using evidence from the OS map extract and your own knowledge, describe how some locations on the map extract might be at risk from future sea level rise.

(4)

locations such as Edithmead (330490) ~~are~~ and Highbridge Northwick (360485) are areas of low lying land. They are completely flat. This means that ~~when~~ the sea levels rise, they have no high land, ~~in are the~~ therefore they will easily flood. Even if the rise was by a meter, these areas are level with sea level at the moment therefore the rise will completely flood them. Breck knoll will not flood though as it's highest point is about 20m above sea level.

(Total for Question 4 = 12 marks)



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Examiner Comments

This is a well located answer that uses clear map evidence to look for future impacts of sea level rise. 4 marks were awarded.

Question 5 (a)

A good range of answers were provided including details of waste baling by ASDA, recycling of old phones (Nokia) and Walkers Crisps reducing water consumption. Centres are reminded that they are free to use their own examples and should not feel restricted to only using published resources associated with the course. The Nokia case study for example now feels a little dated since Nokia are no longer a leading phone brand that many of the candidates would be able to make an association with, as they might once have done 5 years ago. In fact Nokia's phone business is now controlled by Microsoft.

Some candidates were prevented from reaching the maximum of 4 marks by the fact that they only wrote about one policy, when the question demanded two or more to be described.

- 5 (a) Suggest how some large organisations use **policies** or **actions** to become more sustainable.

(4)

Some large organisations can introduce car sharing policies whereby they have pool cars for business excursions eg. British Sugar. This reduces the amount of cars on the road, reducing NO₂ and CO₂ pollution in the air, becoming more sustainable. Asda / Wal-Mart have made their company more sustainable by actions. They have employed Mil-tek to bale plastic shrink wrap from products and recycle it. This is more sustainable as none gets sent to landfill.



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Examiner Comments

Two good examples are provided: British Sugar and car sharing and Asda Mil-tek. There is sufficient development in both examples to award the maximum 4 marks.



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Examiner Tip

Centres should feel free to update their case studies as and when necessary and there is no need to use examples from any of the supporting textbooks. Examiners would, of course, credit all examples as long as they are reasonable and factually accurate.

- 5 (a) Suggest how some large organisations use **policies** or **actions** to become more sustainable.

(4)

Asda/Walmart have changed some of their policies/actions in an attempt to become more sustainable. Previously, the warehouse in which the items are stored before being delivered to Asda/Walmart, would be wrapped in polythene/shrink wrap. Asda would then have a skip, four times a week, to send the waste of the plastic packaging to a landfill site. Now, Asda/Walmart have introduced a new sustainable way - by making - they would now bale and crush the plastic to 10% of its original size. This way, the environment is being helped as less waste is on the landfill sites.



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Examiner Comments

This is an example of a well detailed response but there is not enough range to get 4 marks. Another policy or action was needed. This response was awarded 3 marks.

Question 5 (b)

Overall candidates seemed to have a good understanding of different sustainable transport schemes such as congestion charging, park and ride and car sharing. Many candidates had a good knowledge of specific details from different examples around the country, but some of the information felt dated (once again perhaps relying too heavily on information from a textbook). Some candidates focused on one scheme and showed only limited knowledge of other examples. In this case more range should have been introduced; ideally 3 or 4 schemes should be covered but not all in the same degree of depth.

Weaker responses remain descriptive, rather than engaging in a more evaluative discussion which is now required at this level. Examiners are looking for more than just a narrative style of response in Level 3 where, as in the mark scheme, there is either explanation or discussion.

*(b) Using examples, discuss how sustainable schemes can be used to manage transport in urban areas.

(9)

^{Sustainable} transport
A ~~Sustainable~~ scheme such as congestion charging which has taken place in London. This is where car drivers are charged £8-£10 to drive into London, therefore less people are willing to drive into London so instead get on public transport. This has reduced pollution levels in the area by 21% and has decreased traffic levels in London. The money collected in the congestion charge can also be used for the local people and economy. Another sustainable transport scheme is the park and ride system that is in Cambridge. Cambridge has 5 park and ride systems and have reduced traffic and pollution levels in the area drastically. This has been done by people being forced to park outside the city and ~~then~~ forces them to only get on public transport, ride a bike or walk into town, this has reduced noise pollution for the people living in the area.

A third scheme is improving bike lanes and making it safer for people to ride bikes around urban areas and promote them to get riding. This has successfully been done in Amsterdam so is now in London, with the scheme 'Boris bikes' that reduces the amount of cars in London, therefore reduced traffic and pollution, and ^{this} also keeps people healthier as it is good exercise.



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Examiner Comments

This answer gives a good explanation of different urban sustainable transport schemes. This is at the top of Level 3 with evidence of two or more explanations combined with a small element of discussion / evaluation. It is well communicated with good use of geographical terminology. 4 marks were awarded for SPaG.

*(b) Using examples, discuss how sustainable schemes can be used to manage transport in urban areas.

(9)

In many urban areas, transport can be a major problem. There are two ways that you could manage transport - either through banning transport in urban areas, or by putting in place sustainable schemes.

One example of a sustainable scheme is Congestion charging. Congestion charging was first introduced in Singapore in 1974, and now operates in many cities across the globe. It was introduced in London in 2003, and to drive into certain inner-city areas, you had to pay £10 per day (although this figure has now decreased). As a result of the congestion charging, many ^{more} people are now cycling, and the pollution of these areas has decreased rapidly. As London has excellent public transport services, such as the Tube, people are happy to use this as an alternative to driving in congestion charging zones.

Another sustainable transport scheme is the Park and Ride scheme, which is present in 87 towns and cities across the UK. This is where you park your car in the outskirts of a city, then get a bus into the city centre. It is more sustainable than driving as it means that less vehicles are polluting the city centre. One example of a Park and Ride Scheme is in Cambridge. There are many Park and Ride car parks at the outskirts of the city, which are accessible as they are near major roads such as the M11. It is free to park, and double deckers leave for the city centre every ten minutes, which costs £2.20. 40 passengers on a bus could potentially replace 40 vehicles heading into the city, so it is very sustainable.



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Examiner Comments

This is another example of a good quality and well detailed response getting the maximum of 9 marks. 4 marks were also awarded for SPaG.

Paper Summary

Based on their performance in this paper, candidates are advised to:

- Regularly practice their map skills (as suggested in reports on previous examinations, it is probably a good idea for centres to try and integrate these map skills into general teaching and learning of topics rather than seeing them as a stand-alone unit of work).
- Read the questions carefully and make sure they are answering the question that has been set, for example if they are asked for one example don't give a long list of examples.
- Make good use of relevant geographical terminology.
- Try to make time to check their spelling, punctuation and grammar in questions where SPaG is being assessed so marks are not lost through carelessness.
- Make sure they understand the relevance and applications of Geographical Information Systems (GIS).

Grade Boundaries

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