

Examiners' Report
January 2012

GCSE Geography 5GB2H 01

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Introduction

This paper produced a pleasingly wide spectrum of responses and a mark range which suggested that the questions discriminated effectively between candidates. One message which is not new but certainly worth reiterating is that given that questions use terminology rooted in the specification it is very useful for candidates to be familiar with these key terms. Perhaps, as remarked in more detail in the report, attention should be paid to the increasingly flaccid use of 'sustainable'.

Question 1 (a)

This was a good 2 mark beginning to the paper from the majority of the candidates; 80% picked up both marks. There was good use of data to support the initial remark about the rise in population. A few candidates reported on the change of rate of the increase in population.

SECTION A – INTRODUCTION TO PEOPLE AND THE PLANET

Answer ALL questions in this section.

Topic 1: Population Dynamics

1 Study Figure 1.

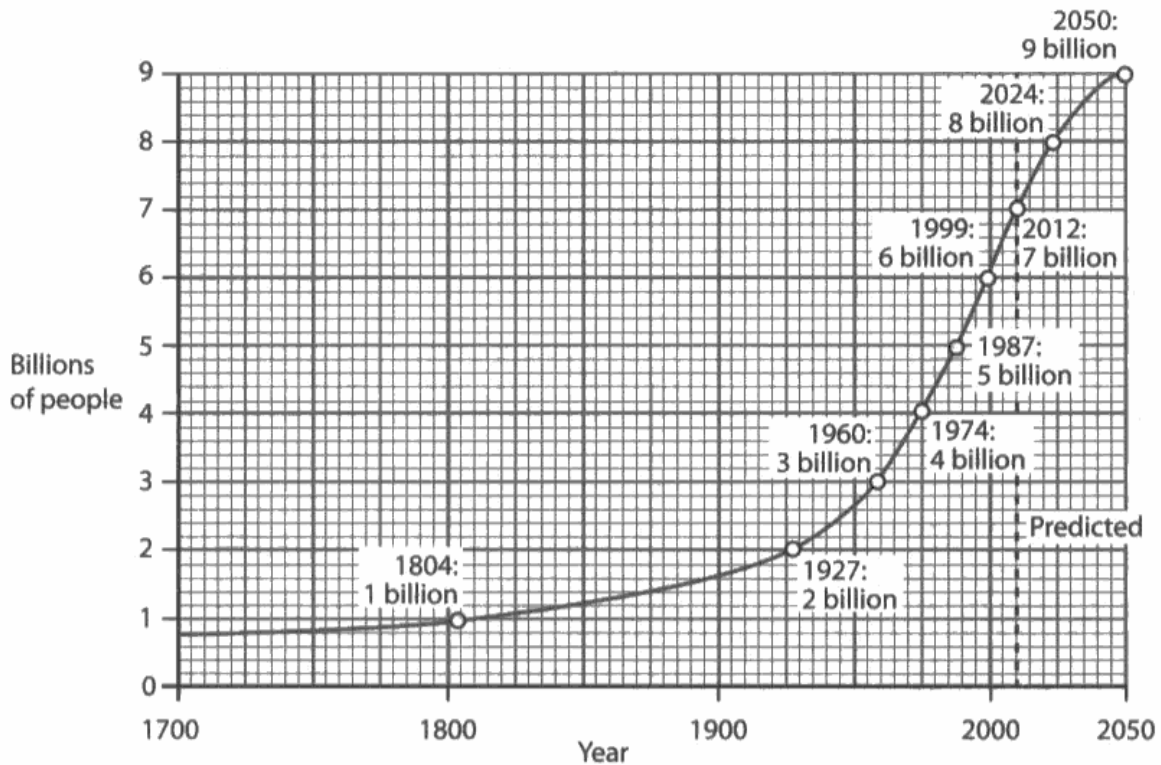


Figure 1 – World population growth 1700 – 2050

(a) Describe the predicted changes in world population between 2012 and 2050.

(2)

The predicted changes in world population in the time period of 2012 and 2050 is that over 38 years, there will be an increase of population that will rise up to 9 billion which is a very short time period.



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Examiner Comments

Just the idea of rise was offered here with no grasp of changing rate.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

If there are two marks look to say two things or extend a basic point.

Question 1 (b)

Many candidates got at least 1 mark for this answer, usually with reference to the lack of jobs or the problem of providing sufficient schools. Few of the candidates scored a second mark through extending their initial idea.

(b) Explain why a youthful population may be a **disadvantage** for a country.

(2)

More money would be needed to fund schools and other educational facilities.
High numbers of young people will cause fewer available jobs and high competition, causing unemployment.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

Strain on educational resources was fine for (1) but the second point was confused in that the 'cause' of job shortages was explicitly a function of young people entering the jobs market.

Question 1 (c)

This question provided many candidates with a mark or two, but only a few appeared to score 4. There was generally an understanding shown of the issue of overpopulation and how this might effect migration policies. There was less clear understanding of under population or how it might effect population policies.

(c) Explain why migration policies vary from country to country.

(4)

Migration policies vary from country to country as in some countries they are extremely unpopulated and bringing more people into the country means more money for the government, whereas in overpopulated countries they don't want to bring in more people that will become unemployed as this looks bad on the government.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This answer provided the initial idea that some policies encourage migration as the government needs more money. It gained 2 marks for this, but could have been stated much more specifically, eg a need for labour. The second idea concerned countries which are sustainable in terms of labour and which would suffer economically by supporting migrants who could not contribute economically to the country. This extension of the initial idea was also worth just 2 marks, making 4 in total.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

The reasons for varied migration policies have a great deal to do with the political acceptability of these policies - candidates should be aware of this debate.

Question 2 (a)

The vast majority of candidates knew where South America was and many of them scored both marks by selecting two areas of variation. In general, points of the compass were used in answers with very few references to top/bottom/left/right. Many candidates correctly identified countries within the continent.

Topic 2: Consuming Resources

2 Study Figure 2.



Figure 2 – Global suitability for solar power

(a) Describe the variations in the suitability for the development of solar power stations in **South America**.

(2)
There is not many power stations
around the equator. because the sun
is on the west side and North east
there quite a lot.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

Although the candidate misunderstood the resource, they picked up a mark for one distributional point.

Question 2 (b)

Most candidates gained 1 mark and clearly knew what it meant to have a renewable resource. Unfortunately some did not add a renewable resource for their second mark, but the better answers did recognise that renewables were cleaner. Very few gained a mark for recognising the slow-down of the use of non-renewables. The modal mark was 2.

(b) Explain why using renewable resources is more sustainable than using non-renewable resources.

(2)

renewable resources are more sustainable because they are used over and over again. like wind turbine. It is also sustainable as it doesn't emit anything and helps reduce climate change.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

The answer recognised the ideas that resources which are renewable do not run out, gave an example, wind farms and showed that these can repair the environment. A very good answer.

Question 2 (c)

There were more good answers in this question than its equivalent in 1c with a modal mark of 4. However too many candidates were unable to name or describe a technological fix and seemed confused about what the question was asking largely because they didn't know what this phrase meant. The better answers did name an invention and this was usually related to transport or the generation of renewable resources. Thus many of the better answers were concerned with hybrid cars/hydrogen technology and the use of wind power to generate electricity.

(c) Explain **two** ways in which technology might 'fix' problems of declining resources.

(4)

1. Solar powered cars can help as they are powered by sun light (infrared) which get transformed into electricity by photovoltaic cells. This helps as there's more oil and petrol not being used so they can be used for more important things than cars (increase in oil).
2. The 'superfoods' such as potatoes can help 'fix' declining resources as they produce a high yield and have 60% more protein than regular ones. This helps declining resources of food as ^{there} would be more food for ~~the~~ more people to eat so there would be less starvation. These potatoes are used in developing countries.

(Total for Question 2 = 8 marks)



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Examiner Comments

This scored full marks by simply naming an appropriate technological fix, Solar and HYVs and explaining how each one can fix the problem of declining resources. In the first case it was the conservation of petroleum, in the second it was the ability to prevent famines through 'superfoods'.

Question 3 (a)

Again this question seemed to have been better answered than in recent years; 75% of candidates picked up both marks. Most candidates wrote about the gap and did not write about each type of poverty separately. There was also good use of supporting data, with several recognising the narrowing, then widening of the gap.

3 Study Figure 3.

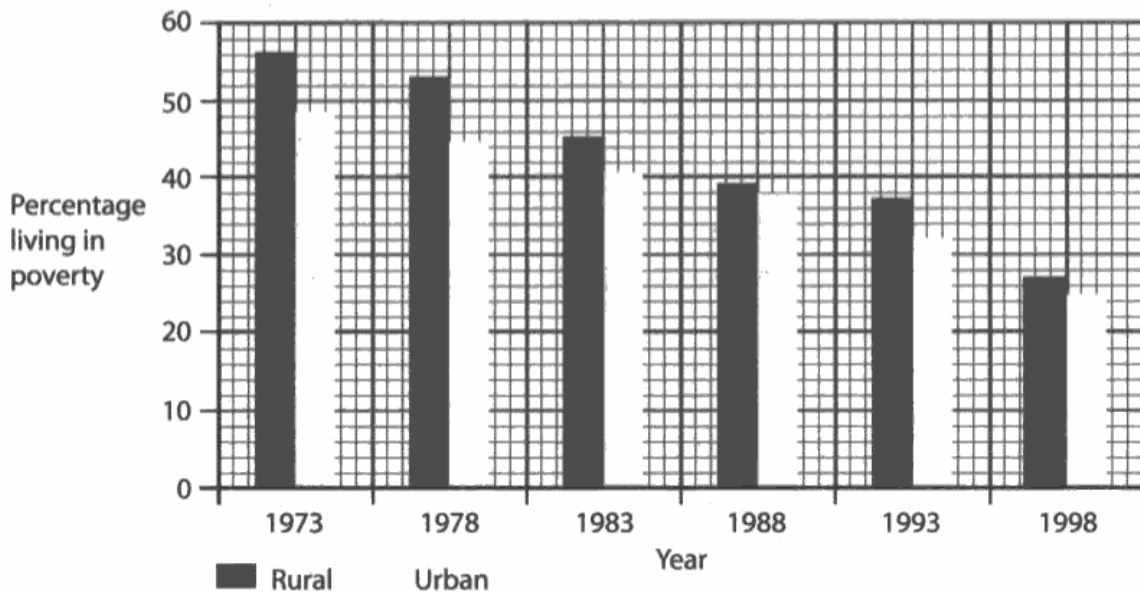


Figure 3 – Poverty in urban and rural areas in India

(a) Describe how the gap between rural and urban poverty has changed over time.

(2)

Over time the gap between Rural and urban ~~poverty~~
Poverty has got smaller and smaller which shows less
people are becoming poor in urban and rural areas.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This was a rare example of a weaker answer worth only one mark for the trend.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Many questions allow a mark for data - it is strongly advisable for candidates to use data if it is provided.

Question 3 (b)

Candidates scored their first mark quite well and most (62%) went on to gain the second mark. Those who did tended to focus on better health care for their second mark after mentioning the pull factor of jobs.

(b) Explain why many people in rural areas of the developing world wish to migrate to urban areas.

(2)
For a better chance at life as there is more ~~chances~~ chances of a job available in the Urban than in the Rural areas.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

Just a simple idea with no development or a second reason, which would have given a second mark.

Question 3 (c)

This proved quite a challenging question for many with just over a third gaining 4 marks. Although discrete groups of people were identified along with their activities for 2 marks, it became problematic for many to locate these activities in the living spaces. It seemed a good question for finding out the more able amongst the candidates, requiring a good degree of understanding as well as competent organisational skills.

(c) Explain why opinions about what makes a living space desirable often change as people get older.

(4)
Opinions change as you get older because people learn that you can live on basic necessities and people grow out of using modern technology. Also as people get older they might need certain assistance within there home which would alter what they need in a living space plus they may want to be close to family or shops.

(Total for Question 3 = 8 marks)



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This was a rambling response that confused living spaces with homes and houses. This topic was entitled 'living spaces' and was clearly about geography and not the interior design of buildings. Of course some credit was allowable (1/4).

Question 4 (a)

75% of candidates knew that Germany was a European country and could read the data correctly.

Question 4 (b)

The most popular answer seemed to be able to work from home and many were able to collect 1 mark here. 86% collected the 1 mark available.

(b) Suggest **one** reason why broadband internet connection is so important in **rural** areas.

(1)

So people can work from home if they can't get into the office for various reasons such as heavy snow fall.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This was a slightly unusual version of the basic idea given by many.

Question 4 (c)

This question proved difficult for many to score full marks; 40% managed that. They seemed more intent on naming the location than describing the activity. Having said that many did score the sustainable mark, especially when it came to the answer relating to creating more jobs.

(c) For a named brownfield site, describe how the plans for its development will make it more sustainable.

(2)

Named brownfield site _____

A brownfield site is sustainable because it would be cheap to refurbish and it would tend to be near the centre of a city so ~~has~~ easy access, so less traveling.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This was typical of candidates who had no proper grasp on what was admittedly the highly flexible concept of sustainability.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Sustainability is such a significant concept in the specification it is well worth taking some time to explore why it has become so flexible.

Question 4 (d)

Many candidates picked up 1 or 2 marks here; the mean mark was 1.8/4. However the better answers did show a good understanding of the topic and would have scored 4 out of 4. There was a good understanding amongst the better answers of lack of government regulation and the informal sector's tax avoidance.

(d) Explain why rapidly growing cities often have a large informal economy.

(4)

Because people go to the cities looking for jobs, but as there aren't enough jobs to support everyone, they have to turn to the informal economy for money e.g. prostitution, market stalls etc. ^{Also} ^{the} Rapidly growing cities ~~are~~ have a lot of people there, but as the growth is so quick there hasn't been ~~computer~~ set up yet to provide the jobs.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

The search for jobs was recognised for 1 mark and the fact that there are not enough gained the second mark. The example of prostitution provided the third mark. The last part of the answer was restating what had already been established.

Question 5 (a)

This was a question where many gained 1 mark, but few seemed to be able to use the stimulus well enough to draw out the 3 marks (just over a third managed 3/3). Many did not recognise the aspect of the Congestion charge being expensive and also referred to individual behaviour rather than the schemes of planners. Hence many skirted 3 marks without collecting them in their examples.

5 Study Figure 5.



Figure 5 – London's congestion charging

(a) Describe how planners might attempt to reduce traffic congestion in cities.

(3)

Congestion charges are in place ~~are~~ are put into place to reduce people using their cars which will make less traffic congestion. Planners may also introduce share car schemes to put less cars on the road such as the 24 lanes in Bristol.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

Two marks, 1 for restrictions on car occupancy and 1 for location.

Question 5 (b)

There were many answers which focused on a very limited range of issues. Many answers dealt with the general issue of traffic causing pollution. The better answers focused on waste disposal and the need to bring in food and water from surrounding regions, eg water from Wales. There were very few answers where the visitor impact aspect was used. The mean mark was just over 3/6 - for A grade candidates it was above 4/6.

*(b) Using examples, explain why cities have an impact on surrounding regions.

(6)

Las Vegas in Nevada, USA is experiencing urban sprawl which means more of the city is being extended into the surrounding Mojave desert. This is ruining the environment as more of it is being built on and it putting a huge demand on water from the Colorado river which will lead to water shortages. Similarly in London ~~at~~ Heathrow Airport is planning on building a new runway and this will result in the Sipson village being demolished and people becoming homeless as 7000 homes are knocked down. The building of this runway will cause noise pollution and ~~the~~ air pollution from machines used and when it is built there will be light, air, and noise pollution.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This answer was well bedded in real locations. It was well structured between the two examples and the candidate explained what type of development in each city is expanding and why this impacts on the surrounding regions. The two case studies explain why a variety of environments are being affected by the presence of activities in the cities, offering a good range and detail.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

These questions are the hardest on the paper and marks are awarded by levels. A top level answer such as this one is well constructed and uses geographical terminology as well as adding detail.

Question 6 (a)

The stimulus was used well in the weaker answers, but there were many fewer developments into 3 marks. Candidates either only gave a couple of points and/or did not develop their ideas with examples, even located ones. The most popular second mark was given for the pressure traffic congestion creates in honey-pot sites.

6 Study Figure 6.



Figure 6 – An eroded footpath in rural Britain

(a) Describe how tourists can create pressures in rural areas.

(3)

tourists could create pressures because rural areas would need to diversify in order to keep their economy going. also tourists could affect wild life and farm animals as they walk through fields and forests.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

A fairly standard answer which failed to develop beyond the disturbance of habitats. The visible footpath erosion was ignored.

Question 6 (b)

This question had many of the weaker answers not providing a reason, despite the command word explain. The issue of remoteness rarely came into answers.

The best answers focused on specific locations, both in developed and developing countries and used the falling income from farming as their starting point. They then went on to look at remoteness, climatic constraints and lack of government investment.

Question 7 (a)

There were too many weak answers here as candidates wrote too generally about the links between the three elements. For many the picture of the wind turbines produced the only mark for some. Those gaining a three on this question were able to focus on examples of social and economic developments and produced a straightforward link to environmental damage; about a quarter of candidates managed this.

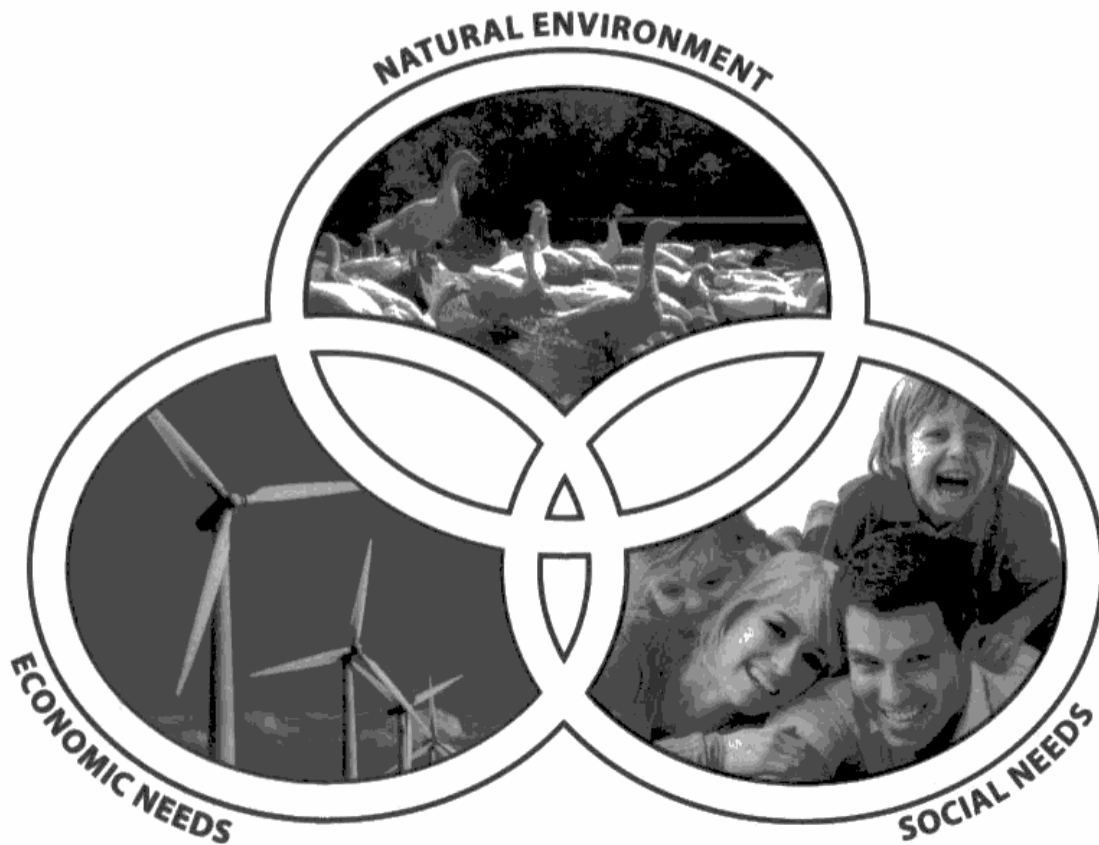


Figure 7 – A model of sustainable development

- (a) Using Figure 7, suggest why protecting the natural environment might be difficult. (3)

Protecting the natural environment may be difficult because, Economic needs for example wind farms, to save money and the economy may destroy animals habitats ^{and nature reserves;} and social needs for example roads ^{and} railways may also destroy habitats and greenfield sites, due to vast population increase.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

A mark was awarded for the wind farms, the destruction of the animals' habitats and the expansion of roads. This candidate saw the need to offer at least two ideas with some expansion.

Question 7 (b)

The better answers showed a very good use of examples linking aspects such as problems with remoteness, lack of funding and lack of strategic planning. Many of the better answers used developing country case studies and showed a good ability to reflect on the success of schemes, both economically and socially.

However, there were many answers which did nothing more than describe some rural developments, eg paintballing and farm shops, without being able to analyse the difficulties which had prompted these developments.

*(b) Using examples, explain why sustainable rural development is hard to achieve.

(6)

Sustainable rural development are hard to achieve in places like ~~India~~ ⁱⁿ India, the rural periphery they built a bio gas generator which ~~or~~ was hard to achieve because it is a ^{bottom up} ~~top down~~ development where the product is just set up by the local community with no help from the government ~~or to~~ or money give to them from the world bank they had to use there own money to set it up them selves so it will benefit them and only them. So rural developments are hard to achieve because the community have to pay for it and set it up themselves.

(Total for Question 7 = 9 marks)



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Examiner Comments

This answer highlighted the involvement of the local community in bio-gas generation in India and the problem of setting up schemes with limited dependence on outside agencies. The candidate also recognised that this was hard because it was a bottom-up development, which had no help from the government. Unfortunately links to sustainability were only inferred.

Question 8 (a)

There was widespread reference to a loss of jobs in this answer without many candidates being able to say from which sector. The most popular correct 1 mark answers seemed to focus on the growth of machines and a few were able to glean a second mark from the robot stimulus. A few of the better responses did refer to the quaternary sector and the rise of the TNCs in the developing world, but it proved a good discriminator.

8 Study Figure 8.



Figure 8 – A view of the New Economy from Time magazine

(a) Using Figure 8, suggest why the new economy creates both 'winners' and 'losers'.

(3)

The Clarke Fisher model has 3 main stages of work in it - Primary, Secondary and Tertiary. As a country moves from one section to the other, it creates benefits from the new section to create 'winners' but causes a worsening of the previous section, making them 'losers'.



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Examiner Comments

This answer broadly ignored the question, especially the reference to winners and losers which were mentioned but not identified. Knowledge was evident but was not related to the resource.

Question 8 (b)

This answer seemed to mirror the type of answer in Q8a. The poorer answers made some passing reference to people losing their jobs and more working in IT.

The better answers followed this lead, but were usually rooted in case studies and expanded the ideas with aspects of outsourcing and the growth of telecottaging. Some of the Level 3 answers were quite narrowly focused, but did recognise trends, even if some of these were quite local.

Paper Summary

With just under 3000 entries the January entry is less predictable and rather more polarised than its much larger summer equivalent. With a good number of resitting candidate and some candidates entering early, levels of maturity vary widely. It isn't surprising therefore that the standard deviation is quite high at 7.7 reflecting a fair sprinkling of very able candidates and some who clearly were not as well prepared for this paper. As is now well established these papers are designed in such a way that for each topic the questions become progressively more difficult and that the final two topics tackled by the candidates offer the greatest challenges of all, especially the longer 6 mark answers. In general terms this is reflected by the statistics with mean mark on the (a) section of the questions varying between 0.8 and 1.8, for the (b) parts 0.8-1.5, always out of 2 and for the (c) part a mean between 2 and 2.5 but with much more variance.

There are perhaps two useful lessons for centres from this type of data and from the experience of having seen many scripts. Firstly the skills related (a) sections do not yield as many marks to less able candidate as would be hoped. Describing patterns and trends is a very well established and frequently practised geographical skill but it is obvious that more can still be done for the less able candidates in guiding them to the best route to meeting such challenges. A second observation, which is not new, is to remind candidate that this is an issues based specification and as a consequence they might reasonably be expected to address questions that involve issues and why opinions differ. This was perfectly illustrated with 1 (c) which was 'disappointing' in producing a comparatively low mean of 2.29 with only 22% of candidate gathering all four marks. Less able candidates failed to address the question they were asked and translated it into something different 'Describe a number of varied migration policies'.

Section B and Section C are designed to be a little more challenging and so it proved although there were some very good answers to the longer 6 mark questions on all four topics. Once again it matters a great deal that candidates understand the key terms on the specification, for example the idea of sustainability and the challenges of defining this in a meaningful way are addressed in the classroom.

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