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Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

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Pearson Edexcel GCSE

In Geography B (1GB0)

Paper 02: UK Geographical Issues

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## **Overview**

The entry for this paper was unsurprisingly small and the candidates probably fell into two main groups; those seeking to reach Grade 4 and those seeking to reach Grade 7 or better. This produced a bi-modal distribution and a highly varied performance across the paper. The main distinction between the candidates was not so much the quality of answers, although these did improve through the cohort, but on the number of questions actually attempted. The stronger candidates attempted most of the questions, the Grade 4 candidates tackled something like 60% of the questions whereas those at the lower end of the mark range attempted about 30% of the questions. It was Section C that was often the most neglected reflecting both its position in the paper but also, perhaps, insecurity over fieldwork questions; an insecurity that has been noted previously, in more normal times.

## **Section A**

The most challenging question in this section was Question 2 (b) where the challenge was to express the idea that some coastlines had a higher relative value than others and therefore were more likely to be protected. Too many answers made a simple and simplistic link between coastlines that were being rapidly eroded and the need to protect them which rarely generated 4 marks. Question 3 (c) also proved challenging with deposition often neglected completely; as has become sadly customary diagrams were very poor and often repeated needlessly in the text. Question 4 also proved challenging and in common with Question 7 was sometimes not attempted at all. It would help candidates greatly if they were equipped with a reusable vocabulary for dealing with questions that deal with relationships or patterns or trends as so many of these 8-mark questions do. These Assess questions have 4 marks allocated to AO4 and 4 for AO3. In 2019 the AO4 extraction involved map interpretation and accurate map reading using the keys. In this November 2020 paper more information could be lifted directly from the text box statements. The challenge in 2020 was the AO3 deconstruction of the question whilst in 2019 the relationship was clear enough and explicable once the AO4 hurdle had been overcome. Most answers neglected to address the reasons why the landscapes might be varied and made little or no use of the map showing the extent of glaciation. There was no need for a detailed knowledge of glacial processes but the specification clearly identifies glaciation as a major factor in the evolution of the UK's landscape. A few students did indeed recognise the contrast between lowland depositional landscapes and upland erosional landscapes, and even the impact of post-glacial rising sea levels creating flooded valleys in south-west England. These were rare but impressive responses.

## **Section B**

Question 5 (b) was one of the best answered questions on the paper. The usual answer involved 'globalisation' offered as an overarching reason although some developed this further talking about free trade and even the deregulation of capital markets. Some even managed to explore the idea that TNCs operating outside the UK might bring profits back into the UK which was encouraging. Question 6 (b) was less successfully answered especially the possible negative effects of regeneration. Question 6 (c) was also rather patchy with some confusion between function and land-use and others straying well beyond the CBD into the central city in general including residential areas. Description tended to be dominant which does not, of course, get any reward. Very few explained the variations of land-use in terms of land values and/or planning which are obviously the two main drivers of variations in urban land-use. Question 7, another 4 AO3

and 4AO4 'assess' question presented candidates with resources that offered a challenge for many – this 2020 question had much more numerical data to unpick unlike for example, the 2019 equivalent question but the topic of income variation is quite familiar. The challenge in 2020 was recognising the focus of the question – the 'impact' of these variations. That was much less well done than the extraction of information from the resource.

### **Section C**

These questions stimulated the usual mosaic of answers. At the stronger end of the cohort there were some good answers to both 8 (d) and 9 (d) with sometimes impressive use of the map evidence provided. There was some confusion between locations and sites, which centres would be well-advised to focus on throughout their delivery of both familiar and unfamiliar questions. The best answers addressed both the practicalities of the decision in terms of time, accessibility and safety but also the academic purpose of the fieldwork – what exactly is the purpose of the research. In, as the question addresses 'two contrasting locations. The responses to questions 10 (e) and 11 (e) were significantly weaker than the resource based unfamiliar 8-mark questions. Without data to interpret AO2 recall was largely missing even in the longer responses; the answers focussed on lack of data as the main weakness and much vagueness over the 'strengths' of the data collection methods. As outlined in the overview, there were a significant number of candidates who did not attempt these longer questions which, are often a significant focus of the final revision sessions; this cohort were obviously deprived of that benefit.

