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**Examiners' Report**  
**Principal Examiner Feedback**

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**Pearson Edexcel GCSE**  
**In Geography B (1GB0)**  
**Paper 01: Global Geographical Issues**

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## Introduction

This paper forms Component 1 of the linear assessment series for the Edexcel B (9-1) Geography specification. Paper 1 is an issues-based paper, covering a range of physical and human geography content. It is a 90-mark paper, broken into three 30-mark sections, with each section covering one topic within the specification. Four additional marks are allocated to the extended writing question within Question (Q) 02 – the Development Dynamics section. These marks are for correct spelling, punctuation, and the accurate use of grammar and specialist terminology (SPGST). The questions are designed to increase in difficulty within each section, culminating in an 8 mark extended writing question. The 'ramp' resets at the beginning of each section. All questions are compulsory. The exam includes multiple-choice questions, short open response, calculations and 8-mark extended writing questions. The exam command words, which are used in this paper, are defined on page 49 of the specification. Each of the questions is mapped to one or more of the Assessment Objectives (AOs).

Candidates performed well given the significant disruption they faced during their GCSE course. Centres should be congratulated in the progress their candidates have made in such extenuating circumstances.

Overall, candidates in the series tended to perform well compared to previous series on explain questions (AO2) and calculate questions (AO4), although the judgement elements of the 'assess' and 'evaluate' questions (AO3) remain a significant challenge for some candidates.

This report will provide comments for a selection of questions. However, it must be considered that with fewer than 40 candidates sitting the November 2021 series any conclusions are tentative given the small evidence base.

### **1b**

Although most candidates were able to identify a piece of evidence which suggests human activity is contributing to climate change, several were unable to gain the additional explanatory mark for linking this evidence to climate change.

The majority of those receiving full marks were credited for the identification of the evidence, most commonly 'sea level rise' with a further explanatory point linking this evidence to melting ice sheets.

### **1ciii**

Several candidates found it difficult to gain full marks. Many of these candidates embarked upon a description of the location of tropical cyclone source areas rather than

explaining why the source areas are found in certain locations. Better answers made use of reference points available on Figure 2 such as the tropics and also made use of the directional arrow.

Where candidates engaged with the command word 'explain' they produced good answers, with many candidates achieving three marks.

### **1dii**

There were many pleasing answers making good use of Figure 3. Candidates referenced the scale, directional arrow and pleasing use of the data available to them with the best answers suggesting why the data was likely to impact death totals in Palu.

There were some excellent answers suggesting that the relatively shallow depth of the focus was significant, explaining why such earthquakes often have devastating impacts. Candidates more commonly gave answers that related to the magnitude of the earthquake and the likely impact on Palu's buildings.

Some answers involved guesswork that the level of development was likely to be significant. Whereas this may have been the case, the question instructs the students to use Figure 3 which contains no data directly referring to the level of development of the area.

### **1e**

Answers often focussed on the contrasting shape of shield and composite volcanoes although many were unable to give a reasoned explanation for this variation in shape. A disappointing number of candidates made overly simplistic references linking the type of volcano to a plate boundary type.

### **1f**

Level 1 answers commonly offered simplistic reasoning that the effectiveness of management of a tectonic hazard relates to the level of development of the country with answers lacking explanation why emerging or developing countries often struggle to effectively manage such events.

The 8 mark questions in paper 1 are weighted AO2 4 marks and AO3 4 marks. Those candidates who did not engage with the evaluate element of the question were limited to Level 2, because they were unable to access AO3. In weaker, Level 1 responses, a significant number of candidates offered very generic answers which could have been applicable to any tectonic event demonstrating 'isolated elements of understanding'. Other answers which struggled to move up the mark scheme were somewhat unbalanced, offering exclusively either criticisms or praise of the response to an earthquake or volcano therefore neglecting the evaluation element of the question.

The highest-performing candidates gave a balanced evaluation of either earthquake or volcano management, supplementing their answers with specific locational detail. This

high quality AO2 knowledge enabled candidates to be more specific when making judgements. It was evident that these candidates were well prepared for this type of question, making evaluative judgements throughout their answer leading to balanced conclusions.

### **2biii**

A common error when plotting lines of best fit is for candidates to draw their line through (0,0) or the origin. A line of best fit does not necessarily need to pass through the origin. Instead, a well-drawn line of best fit should have roughly an equal number of plots either side of it and should stop at the first or last point as it is not possible to extrapolate beyond these reference points. The best responses to this question had 5-7 points either side of the line.

### **2ciii**

In this 3 mark 'explain' question, candidates were required to explain an element of Frank's dependency model. Two further marks were available for the explanation of how this inhibits the development of less developed countries. There were some very good answers which made use of information from the fact file in the previous question, relating this to Frank's theory of dependency. There were also a significant proportion of answers which attempted simplistic explanations of why poorer countries are poor without relating their answer to Frank's model.

### **2dii**

Most candidates were able to identify a relevant data presentation technique, with a pie graph being the most common answer. However, many of these candidates went on to state that this technique would allow the data to be displayed in a clear way rather than describing how the technique would look on paper, for instance by mentioning that segments of the pie chart could represent different destinations for the USA's exports.

### **2diii**

Candidates at the lower end of the ability range found this question challenging as they were not familiar with the term 'foreign direct investment'. The wording for all questions in the series will come directly from the specification. It is therefore important that candidates are encouraged to learn key geographical terminology.

This was an example of a 2x2 question requiring the identification of two ways foreign direct investment has changed in an emerging country since 1990 development with each point explained as to how why it had changed to gain full marks.

India was by far the most popular choice for an emerging country with the most common route to success mentioning that FDI had significantly increased since 1990, attributed this change to India's less restrictive approach to FDI post 1991.

## **2e**

The A02 element was stronger than the A03 element in almost all cases with India by far the most commonly selected emerging country.

Most candidates scored 3 or 4 marks (low level 2). Many did not include sufficient detailed knowledge of their named emerging country to progress beyond low level 2. Rather their answer was very generic and could be applied to many emerging nations. A further issue was that candidates did not fully interpret the question, instead exclusively discussing the negative impacts economic growth can have upon the environment rather than assessing the view as the question demanded.

Candidates who progressed through level 2 and into level 3 offered a balanced assessment of the view that economic growth always has a negative impact upon the environment, maintaining balance and showing an appreciation that economic growth can also lead to environmental improvements.

## **3b**

Like 2diii, candidates were expected to identify and extend two points. This question was answered well by candidates at the top end of the ability range, Most commonly, a characteristic of urban land use was identified such as the commercial land uses being often found in central areas. This was then extended with a well-reasoned explanation as to why the identified land use was found in a particular location. At the lower end of the ability range, candidates were unsure of the meaning of the term 'land-use' and had little knowledge of land use variation in urban areas.

## **3cii**

This question examined the ability of candidates to make comparisons between two choropleth resources and to make use of data in their answers. At the top end of the ability range, candidates were able to make three separate comparative statements, often making use of some of the stimulus material on the resource, such as referencing Egypt directly. At the lower end of the ability range, candidates often scored 1 mark for mentioning that the urban population for all African countries is set to increase but were unable to highlight differences in the rates of this increase.

## **3ciii**

This was another question asking candidates to make direct reference to the resource in their answer, an aspect which was often omitted from responses. Higher scoring responses made use of data from the entire resource, often linking a high percentage urban population with job opportunities in urban areas with lower rates in several African countries being a consequence of a more agricultural society, At the lower end of the ability range, candidates made little or no reference to the resource and made generic comments relating to poverty in many African countries.

### **3di**

This calculation question challenged candidates to manipulate data from the resource. At the lower end of the ability range, some candidates simply calculated the change in the number of toilets. Higher ability candidates were able to make use of the population figure given for 2019 and divide by the number of toilets available and then subtract 520 from this figure giving an answer of 160.

### **3e**

This question examined the candidates' knowledge of the advantages of top-down strategies in their chosen megacity. A significant proportion of candidates were unable to reference any specific top-down strategies in a named megacity, rather answering the question in a generic fashion, outlining advantages of any top-down strategy, commonly their scale. Higher ability candidates were able to reference specific strategies, typically Vision Mumbai. High scoring answers identified two advantages of a specific top-down project and explained how they had improved the lives of citizens.

### **3f**

The AO3 element of this question proved challenging for the lower end of the ability range with many answers either short or very generic answers which could be applied to any megacity. The most commonly selected cities by some distance was Mumbai. Lower scoring responses typically were able to identify some ways that life in megacities provided several challenges, typically referring to living conditions and lack of a reliable income. Answers tended to be skewed towards challenges, with the opportunities element being discussed much less frequently. There were some excellent responses covering recycling opportunities in locations such as Dharavi as well as the expanding tertiary and quaternary sectors with answers linked to the expanding influence of foreign direct investment.

Evaluation was a feature of very few answers, limiting answers to low and mid-level 2. When it was done well, candidates were able to find a balance between the challenges and opportunities, referencing specific areas within megacities such as the financial district in Mumbai and providing ongoing evaluation throughout their answer and in well-balanced conclusions.

## Summary

Moving forwards, the following points may help guide future teaching and learning.

- Some questions such as 3cii and 3ciii will ask candidates to make use of a resource. Ensure that when directed to do so, the resource is referenced in answers,
- Ensure that resources are studied carefully. Many resources will have a compass and additional reference points such as the equator and/or tropics. Try to make use of these in answers.
- Keep practising 'assess' and 'evaluate' style questions. Together, they account for 28 marks out of 94 on this paper. Focus on making balanced judgements supported by evidence to access AO3 marks, ensuring answers arguments are balanced.
- Case-study knowledge is important. In the 'Development Dynamics' section, there is a compulsory case-study of an emerging country. In the 'Challenges of an Urbanising World' section candidates must cover a megacity in either a developing or emerging country. Be prepared to use specific case study detail to support your answers.
- In questions in which candidates are asked to develop a single reason, it is important to ensure that the appropriate number of developmental points are made. The number of marks should be used as a guide to doing this.
- Ensure that all wording in the question is considered when producing answers. For example, in question 3diii the reasons for change in foreign direct investment were often omitted with the focus being on why foreign direct investment has occurred.
- it is important to remember how to perform different calculations (AO4). A full list of the required mathematical skills can be found on page 38 of the specification. 2 mark calculation questions often require candidates to fully show their working.



