

GCE

General Studies

Advanced GCE **A2 H479**

Advanced Subsidiary GCE **AS H079**

OCR Report to Centres June 2016

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA) is a leading UK awarding body, providing a wide range of qualifications to meet the needs of candidates of all ages and abilities. OCR qualifications include AS/A Levels, Diplomas, GCSEs, Cambridge Nationals, Cambridge Technicals, Functional Skills, Key Skills, Entry Level qualifications, NVQs and vocational qualifications in areas such as IT, business, languages, teaching/training, administration and secretarial skills.

It is also responsible for developing new specifications to meet national requirements and the needs of students and teachers. OCR is a not-for-profit organisation; any surplus made is invested back into the establishment to help towards the development of qualifications and support, which keep pace with the changing needs of today's society.

This report on the examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the examination.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this report.

© OCR 2016

CONTENTS

Advanced GCE General Studies (H479)

Advanced Subsidiary GCE General Studies (H079)

OCR REPORT TO CENTRES

Content	Page
F731 The Cultural and Social Domains	4
F732 The Scientific Domain	8
F733 Domain Exploration – Applying Synoptic Skills	11
F734 Culture, Science and Society: Making Connections	14

F731 The Cultural and Social Domains

General Comments:

Examiners were very impressed by the responses to the questions and the diligence and endeavour shown by candidates in their work. This is a challenging paper that not only visits a range of subject areas but also involves the mastery of several answering strategies. Generally, candidates performed well in most questions and displayed wide knowledge and an ability to make informed and reasoned observations supported by relevant examples and reference to current affairs and matters of public concern and celebration. This was a smaller entry than previous sessions but the quality of response remained high with few examples of facetious answers. Most candidates used their time judiciously and it can only be perceived that centres have taken on board the comments in previous reports that have suggested a more planned approach to time management.

Many candidates use ICT in their studies and the value of this experience is clear and irrefutable. Centres must remember that the vast majority of public examinations involve candidates using the written word. Examiners expect to read properly formatted sentences, and paragraphs that present cogent answers to a structured short answer question and a convincing and balanced argument in an essay. Equally, it is reasonable to expect that words in common usage (as well as words that are printed on the examination paper) are spelt correctly. Though some scripts are of the highest quality in terms of content, the submission of a disorganised script will not create the desired impression to examiners. The practising of writing under pressure, and within a time limit, is an important revision exercise in the preparation for an A level examination.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Section A

Questions 1ai-iii Most candidates were able to interpret each term but frequently resorted to reusing the exact words of the question, especially in 1aii. “Focused” and “derivative” were the least often grasped in context. Many candidates simply attempted to define each word separately rather than considering the whole phrase which lead to some difficulties, including the forced repetition of some of the words from the question.

Question 1b Candidates easily identified two advantages for sticking to one style but the attempted development of some answers tended to see the repetition or rewording of the initial point made: this lead to some ambiguity. The easiest way to gain the full marks was to state the point and then offer and link an example, but this was rare to see.

Question 1c Most candidates were able to offer some ways and reasons for changes to an artist’s style but they were often very generalised and lacked reference to specific examples. When examples were used they tended to be simply named and the specific changes in question were not explored in detail. Popular music featured strongly here but references to painters, film directors and the ubiquitous Banksy also appeared. There was little technical detail offered and the changes tended to be somewhat superficial in focus, such as image, trends and fashions to appeal to a wider/different audience. However, candidates that used examples to develop and extend their answers tended to score higher marks. A small minority considered ‘sport’ to be an art but there were some extensive details of artists who had ‘re-invented themselves’ with Miley Cyrus and Picasso quite popular choices. There were some good examples of painters and musicians (particularly singers) who had either stuck with one style or

had changed their style which produced some very detailed and supportive reasons for the change.

Section B

Question 2 There were some good accounts from personal experience but many gave ‘third person’ responses that were quite valid but less effective. Answers did not always focus on cultural awareness but were more general about the idea of experience. Some very thoughtful and persuasive ideas were presented including those connected to the experience of travel, multiculturalism, and volunteering. Media and documentaries, festivals and life-changing events were also cited, presenting examiners with interesting discussion of a wide range of enrichment activities that candidates had been involved in.

Question 3 A number of answers here were often very general and simply repeated and then became reflective opposites. Better answers were able to distinguish between types of blog, their purpose, subject matter and audience, sometimes with specific examples. Some candidates also referred to blogs being free, as in not charging rather than freedom of expression. The inclusion of good knowledge of famous ‘bloggers’, the issues they represent, and the power that they had over a growing readership gave strength to essays. There were some extreme responses suggesting absolute freedom of speech and no censorship, the blog being a good starting point. Indeed, examiners noted that there is a continued concern that some young people think that there is total freedom to say anything using the internet as a medium with no fear of prosecution. There were divided opinions on whether bloggers should be paid or not.

Question 4 Examiners were appraised of the Arts experience and provision in many schools by the frank and critical views that many candidates shared about their own education. This was a very popular choice with many candidates being in favour of the promotion of the Arts in schools though there were others who saw the high expenditure on facilities and equipment being better directed towards core subjects and infrastructure. Many candidates enthusiastically defended the Arts in school, often using personal experiences, based on students developing improved communication skills and confidence. Creativity, expression, stress relief, and a break from other subjects were often cited as key benefits of Arts education. Better responses looked at the downsides, including funding, perceived worth, career prospects, whether or not they should be extra-curricular or hobbies, and how some people were too nervous to participate. Relatively few candidates gave specific references to the Arts with which they had experience, for example specific plays, artists or music they had studied and/or performed. It was surprising not to see more evidence of involvement in playing a musical instrument in a concert or performing a role in a play.

Section C

Question 5a Few candidates made convincing points about both privacy and security by relating their views closely to the cartoon. Most grasped the essential debate but good development of the context of the cartoon was often lacking. However, the majority of answers were competent and referred to surveillance, privacy, CCTV, government security and the fact that balancing these is not easy. Strong answers were able to place the views in a local context.

Question 5b The question seemed to engage candidates well and there were some imaginative suggestions and criticisms. These were usually along the lines of adding words, people or arranging the flags so that they were more equally visible. There was unanimous support for avoiding the placement of the more prominent nations towards the front of the image.

Question 5ci This was poorly answered and few candidates did little more than paraphrase the words in the question, often using the *same* words which had appeared in the quotation. A few

candidates were able to contextualise King’s comment in the civil rights movement and what this meant for freedom and expression.

Question 5cii This question was often answered with some enthusiasm. Sport (usually football but Wales/England rugby was sometimes cited) being more popular than bordering countries, though there was a surprising lack of named examples in a number of responses on both these issues. Sources of tension were usually accurately identified, if in general terms, while meaningful solutions were harder to come by. There were lots of woolly “realise it’s just a game” or “learn to get on together” type suggestions as well as non-competitive (league) games being the answer. A few answers were built on the idea of not selling team shirts to fans or even limiting cities like Manchester and Liverpool to only having one soccer team! Some candidates were more thoughtful and recognised the difficulties and scale of the issues as well as the limitations of some of their proposed measures. For example, the costs of policing, the difficulty of identifying aggressors in a crowd, and how the separation of fans was hiding rather than solving the problem. The responsibility of the players as role models was seen as important, along with alcohol bans and uniting behind common causes. In relation to border issues it was clear that some candidates had detailed knowledge of specific areas and regions of the world and used examples such as the Nile countries (and tensions surrounding water supplies), Israel and Palestine and their political and religious tensions, North and South Korea and the military tension and differing ideologies, Kashmir and historical India/Pakistan tensions, and the US and Mexico with regard to immigration. The solutions to many of the problems were not always convincing with “open the border” and “merge the countries” appearing more than once. The role of peacekeepers and diplomacy in the form of the UN was sometimes recognised.

Section D

Question 6 As ever, with a local government question, many candidates had limited knowledge about who or what is meant by local government. Examiners commonly found candidates regarding this as the work of the Member of Parliament and a team of supporters. Essays emerged that were little more than descriptions of the local refuse collecting rota, the merits and pitfalls (and potholes) of the local roads and street lighting, the limitations and cost of leisure facilities, and poorly resourced libraries. Often there was little linkage between the service and its providers to explain the limitations within which local government operates. This was evidenced by references to clearly privately-run gym chains or even cinema complexes which had no connection to local government and its functions. Some answers explained simply why some of the services were important in a plain and assertive way and it became clear that some candidates simply did not understand the workings and structure of their local area. There were a few references to organisation and funding including council tax but this was usually in a very superficial way. Some candidates made reference to all the services, rather than choosing two.

Question 7 Candidates had several options to choose from but many used the question as a vehicle to complain about tuition fees, immigration, national security or any of the other misdeeds of the Establishment. Not all the principles were clearly grasped. Objectivity, for instance, was sometimes understood to mean objecting to something or having clear goals and objectives. Most answers attempted to explain the meaning of the terms chosen, tried to outline their importance in context and give convincing specific examples but the degree to which this was achieved depended on a secure understanding of how they related to the government of the country. The inclusion of examples was important to achieving success in answering this question. One or two cases saw candidates seizing the opportunity to share their political knowledge by discussing the work of Select Committees and Prime Minister’s Questions in the House of Commons (to illustrate accountability).

Question 8 This was a surprisingly unpopular despite the publicity that has been given to the Northern Powerhouse by the government. A few took issue with the term and its absolute nature, with some effect, but few candidates seemed to have much real understanding of what is

meant by North-South Divide. Solutions were generally simplistic, along the lines of 'make house prices dearer in the north (or cheaper in the south)' or 'improve education in the north'. There was a lot of misunderstanding about local and national funding, the cost of living when comparing cities like Manchester and London, and infrastructure. Surprisingly, there were virtually no mentions of HS2 and its importance in linking the north and south with a rapid transport system. The best answers referred to current financial and governmental issues and were well-versed in historical ideas of how each area is perceived by the public. These candidates acknowledged the industrial heritage of the north in shipbuilding, steelmaking, mining, and the textile industry but further pointed to the issues faced by the decline of these industries, and the effect on the population.

F732 The Scientific Domain

General Comments:

The overall performance of candidates was very good with responses to Section B indicating that time had been used very well.

The course content of this unit involves the use of mathematical skills which are included in GCSE courses. In Section A some questions required an understanding of substitution into a formula and the interpretation of a graph. However, some candidates did not always ensure that their response was clear to these parts of the question.

In Section B, examiners noted the use of clear communication skills and good vocabulary particularly when examples and personal experience had been included. A large number of candidates were able to demonstrate a range of knowledge learned from their General Studies course, from other AS courses, and their own personal life experience. It was pleasing to see only a few rubric errors compared to previous sessions.

In each question, particularly for Section B, there are key words which the candidate should bear in mind when offering their response. Responses to Question 3 did not always refer to an area of research, as stated in the question. In Question 4, there were only a few responses which used an example of forecasting, thus making it more difficult for the candidate to assess reliability. Responses to Question 5 were usually very well done, however there was a tendency to write an essay about Genetically Modified Food, for example, without a comparison to the other two areas or even to funding. Candidates should be reminded about the importance of these key words in questions.

Assessment Objective 4 (Communication) is assessed throughout the paper and attention must be paid to the presentation, style and coherence of essays, particularly in Section B. Only a small number of responses displayed poor handwriting skills.

Section A

Question 1

- 1ai** Most responses to this part were correct; unfortunately a few candidates misread the table and chose '14.49' as their response, having not read the question carefully enough.
- 1aii** On the whole, this part was generally correct, giving answers in either hours and minutes or just minutes. Only a very few candidates were not able to calculate the time difference.
- 1aii** The crux of this question was that it was the 'latest' train that was needed from London Euston. Most responses were very clear and correct however there were some which included reference to earlier trains than the 14:00 or which arrived later than 16:30. Candidates should be reminded that, if they need to cross out some work, then the replaced response should be clearly written.
- 1aiv** It was very encouraging that most candidates were able to use the speed, distance and time relationship. Although there were many variations of units used, responses were very clear in this part of the question. In weaker cases, a few candidates were unable to convert the '2 hours and 15 minutes' correctly to hours as a decimal so the figure of '2.15' was used instead of '2.25'.
- 1b** On the whole candidates were able to provide a very good range of reasons for the unreliability of the survey. The fact that it was rush hour and commuters would not have

time to fill in the survey, the small time slot used and the use of only one location were common responses. A few candidates noted that there might well be disruption further in to the day because of strikes or weather.

Some weaker responses were seen where the candidate had simply referred to Table 1 and said that there were no trains at that time. A few suggested that the sample size was not large enough, but that did not form part of the survey in the question. Once again it is very important that candidates read the question very carefully to avoid errors such as these.

Question 2

2ai This was generally well answered and most responses gained 2 marks.

2aii It was important for this part, where the candidate had to interpret the graph, that responses were clearly directed to 'differences' as per the question.

Some very good and clear differences were offered, for example that overall more people bought Clothes and sport than Films and music. It was also noted that there was a wider range in Films and music than Clothes and sport. There were some very detailed responses offered where the candidate had used specific age groups to find a difference. In weaker cases candidates merely read off values and simply stated them or they offered similarities as part of their response.

2b This part of the question was generally very well done with candidates offering a wide variety of health risks. Some responses referred to the fact that we did not know what was actually in the medicine and there could have been added ingredients which might cause allergies. It was also noted that where there was no contact with a professional, a doctor or pharmacist, then the medicine could have a higher dosage than normal or might react with other medication taken by the purchaser. The fact that testing and regulations may not have been used in the country of origin or that during transit it may have become contaminated were also other excellent points.

In weaker responses there was often some overlap and constant reference to a 'health risk' which was part of the stem of the question.

Section B

Question 3

In the responses seen to this question the stronger ones had chosen an area of research or made a brief reference to one. This then helped in the rest of their response when covering the model in the question. Some candidates assessed the model but then stated that there were other points which might have been include, for example, health and safety or repetition of the experiment. Control variables and sampling methods were referred to in a few cases.

However some weaker responses were seen where the candidate had merely described each bullet point with no reference to an area and simply offered a brief resume of the question.

Question 4

The use of examples or personal experience was important for this question. Candidates who included them, for example, weather forecasting, football matches or stocks and shares managed to provide good responses. Included in some reasons for reliable/unreliable forecasts were the constant changes of some variables, particularly in the context of weather or stocks and shares. Some referred to the advance in technology over the years and how the use of past data to predict might make the forecast unreliable in these cases.

In some weaker responses there was simply a brief reference to weather on TV channels or the fact that weather could change suddenly, with very little mention of reliability.

Question 5

Some very good responses were seen to this question with a large proportion choosing Mental Health for further funding. Candidates often used their own experience and showed a very strong knowledge of this topic. Responses referred to various ideas for the use of further funding, for example the stress on young people, the use of counselling and importantly for nearly all of them, to raise awareness of Mental Health problems. In most cases candidates referred to the other areas by suggesting that GM foods and organ transplants did not affect as many people, and also that they had already had increased funding. It was often commented on that organ transplants did not need further funding, simply more donors and hence more awareness of that issue.

Where GM foods was included as a choice, some good responses were seen where the candidate explained briefly what it was and how it would be beneficial. Generally they argued that food affected everyone and further funding would allow research into possible side effects. In weaker responses candidates merely wrote about GM foods, often in too much detail, rather than linking the topic to funding and a choice of one area over others. Global warming appeared in a few responses together with comments regarding famine. Some candidates who chose organ transplants did not go beyond the idea that more donors were needed and seemed to repeat their points.

F733 Domain Exploration – Applying Synoptic Skills

General Comments

Candidates engaged well with the paper and it proved accessible to a wide range of levels with most candidates managing to attempt all the questions. It was good to see candidates writing in continuous prose especially in Question 4 and making concerted efforts to plan their work. It was also pleasing to see that candidates paid heed to the question with few rubric errors. For example, where the paper asked for 3 reasons or 2 differences they were generally given, although it should be noted that a certain level of balance is needed in these answers to achieve top marks. The amount of fully completed scripts with more than adequately attempted essays suggests that candidates did not find timing an issue. Also it should be noted that handwriting was generally legible.

Section A was well received, the topics seemed to chime with the students especially in Questions 3 & 4 which provided some interesting and well informed answers. That being said, candidates need to keep in mind that this is a synoptic paper and many Question 4 answers did not reflect this, focusing on scientific progress and trends and sidelining the social and cultural elements or leaving them implicit to the argument.

Section B produced some well-rounded essays. It was pleasing to see that candidates were more than aware of how to structure an essay and at their best they provided conclusions that attempted thoughtful evaluation. Once again candidates should be reminded of the synoptic element to the paper and also the benefits of the use of AO3. When sensitively and pertinently used, AO3 supports arguments, aids evaluation and can lift answers into the top level.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Section A

Question No. 1

An accessible question that saw all 4 aspects used. Better candidates gave equal weighting to both aspects and gave examples from different domains to achieve top marks. There was some very good referencing of inner city areas that have high levels of Muslim population that may lead to a misconception of the percentage of Muslims in the UK. Similarly there was some insightful analysis as to why the percentage of teenage girls who get pregnant is overestimated. Candidates generally cited television, the predominance of sex education and the use of social media as examples of possible causes for this overestimation. Weaker answers lacked balance and tended to concentrate on the role of the media with little detail. Some of the best answers proffered additional information on the composition of the participants in the opinion polls.

Question No. 2

Another accessible question showcasing a range of abilities. Top range of marks went to candidates that referenced and made use of the graphs over merely quoting the statistics or generalising from them. This question proved close to many students' hearts and the honesty with which it was approached was refreshing. This was especially so where students, despite giving details as to why General Studies may not be valued, also cited areas where the value is undeniable particularly in relation to displaying certain synoptic skills. These candidates gave some insightful answers as to the role and perception of General Studies within school and

society in general in comparison not just to Maths but other chosen subjects. Indeed this proved to be a discriminator for this question as weaker candidates conflated the information making the false assumption that the candidates in the graph were the same and therefore losing out on the comparisons that could be made. When making deductions from data it should be impressed upon students that it is important to be specific. Similarly candidates missed out on marks through repetition in the development of their reasoning (all too often any difference resulted in the student “not trying hard”) or through not giving equal weighting to all three differences.

Question No. 3

Although most students managed to achieve marks on this question the subtlety between truth and belief evaded even some of the more capable students. That said, many patently understood these differences and even where they had not managed to match the correct word to the statement gave a definition that scored marks. Candidates need to make sure that they match their development of answers to the total amount of marks available. Better candidates gave well developed answers scoring high marks.

Question No. 4

This question appealed to candidates, with many being able to engage with the topic area in an insightful manner. The differentiating factor for this short essay was the prevalence of synoptic skills. Weaker scripts focused almost entirely on technology and the negative effects on the shop, whilst paying little attention to the social and cultural elements and the impact of these elements in both positive and negative terms. There was a tendency to underestimate this task's potential, with lower scoring essays being defined by the bullet points in the question and becoming a list of rather underdeveloped points rather than forging their own path. Generally answers were clearly expressed but often lacked the facility for top marks. Those who did well had some thoughtful ideas for the future of the shop along the lines of cultural changes influencing groceries or items stocked e.g. halal foods & hijabs. Also cited were changes in legislation curtailing smoking or the consumption of sugar, and social eating and drinking habits, for example how socialising in the UK is based around alcohol, or more recently coffee. Those who did not manage to access the full range of marks gave more unusual and unsupported visions of the future such as cigarette and alcohol sales would boom, or indeed ventured into the realm of science fiction with packages de- & re-materialising putting paid to the delivery and collection service.

Section B

Question 5

This was the most popular essay question. The better candidates deconstructed the terms of the question understanding the implication of “a stab in the back” and also differentiated between this and society’s misuse of technology. These essays had pertinent examples and were seamlessly balanced with thoughtful evaluation. Essays in this category displayed a breadth of examples whereas lower scoring scripts tended to focus on one area, more often than not social media. Weaker candidates accessed this question through a series of advantages and disadvantages of technology that were seldom linked and focussed mainly on misuse with no awareness of the tension this posed in terms of the question asked. However it should be noted that even so, some well-placed AO3 and evaluation was enough to raise marks here.

Question 6

This question produced some thoughtful answers with the best sensitively utilising personal experience and referencing the question. It was evident that candidates understood the realities of this question even if this was not explicitly stated and the better answers took the question

beyond face value with some considered evaluation and balance. Candidates made reference to the idea that some communities find support in living together in particular areas where they can express their beliefs freely, but were aware of the risks that this poses to multiculturalism in terms of these communities becoming segregated and stigmatised. Few made reference to the problems that this segregation may pose within their own communities, although it was sometimes acknowledged e.g. in reference to violence within those communities. Weaker essays tended to be very literal and focus on the food aspects of culture. These scripts referenced the wide range of culinary options we have: Chinese, Indian etc. and the racial abuse that multiculturalism can foster using examples from both the personal and public arenas. However, even a cursory analysis of these issues lent itself to the idea of minorities being concentrated in certain areas which assisted the marks.

Question 7

When well answered this question showed a wealth of knowledge and some thoughtful analysis of the repercussions both social cultural and economic of over-prescription. However this question also lent itself to digression. Weaker candidates were seen to be using transferable knowledge from subjects such as biology or sociology. This can be a useful skill, however there was a tendency in these scripts to lose focus and this lowered marks. These candidates tended to over-develop certain themes such as antibiotic resistance and return over and over again to the same economic consequences and their essays were often stilted and lacked evaluation. However, top range essays managed to sometimes, although not always, produce an essay with balance (there are positives to prescription if not so obviously over-prescription that warranted an analysis here) and give examples to support varying perspectives and to aid evaluation. Again the benefits of using personal experience in a subtle manner cannot be over-emphasised and is something that we seemed to see less of this series than in previous years.

To summarise, overall this paper demonstrated the breadth of understanding that the candidates have of the world in which they live and evidenced their ability to put forward generally convincing arguments through synoptic skills and evaluation. It highlighted what the candidates displayed they were aware of in Question 2, i.e. that in terms of skills this paper is extremely valuable and challenging for all levels of student.

F734 Culture, Science and Society: Making Connections

General Comments:

It was pleasing to note that the overwhelming majority of candidates were well prepared for the demands of the paper. Candidates were able to use their time effectively. Examiners commented positively upon the quality of responses and noted that the majority demonstrated focus and thoughtfulness. In addition, there were very few, if any, responses which bore no relationship to the questions which had been asked.

Over the course of the specification the design of the questions has been in two parts. One part requires candidates to demonstrate knowledge, awareness and understanding from each of the three domains in relation to a topic. The second part requires candidates to consider the extent to which an issue applies. It has always been the case that the weaker candidates rely heavily on the source material, and that those accessing the higher marks are able to use the source material as a springboard for a discussion. This year was no different but the nature of the source material, particularly for question 1, offered the candidates the opportunity to use their own first-hand knowledge. While this aspect saw some improvement, it was still disappointing to note that a significant number of candidates failed to explore the second part of the question, or give only passing reference to the concept of 'extent'.

The quality of written communication is still a cause for concern for examiners. On occasion handwriting is extremely difficult to read. Examiners continue to be alarmed by the continual confusion between 'affect' and 'effect' their/there/they're, 'should of' instead of 'should have', and 'are'/'our'. In the past examiners have lamented the demise of the apostrophe, but this year they expressed concern that the full stop appears to have been replaced by the comma in a large number of instances, and that the paragraph is also in decline.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Question No.1

The question contained two sources: one outlined the long term vision for the legacy of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games; and the other was an extract from a statement made by Boris Johnson in 2014. Candidates were asked to discuss the ways in which the legacy of the games have affected the UK since 2012, and then to consider to what extent major investment in sporting events by the government benefited the whole of the UK population.

Those candidates who accessed the higher marks were able to offer a response which considered both parts of the question, and were able to offer examples when discussing the 'legacy of the games'. These responses often used named examples of athletes, and various campaigns and initiatives. The latter included examples such as 'This Girl Can', 'The Invictus Games', the 'Sainsbury's School Games', and various other 'Get in Sport' initiatives which had been developed in various parts of the country. Some responses also included direct first-hand experience in relation to the 'legacy of the games' and were able to include examples relating to horse riding, rowing, athletics and gymnastics, for example. The inclusion of examples was one method of differentiating between the quality of scripts.

Weaker responses worked steadily through the source material and failed to include any additional examples or development. It was surprising that in a number of these responses candidates were unable to name a sportsperson and often talked in very vague terms about sport in general.

Where extent was addressed the conclusion was often that investment in major sporting events did not benefit the whole of the UK. Weaker answers only identified that the reason for this was that the games were in London. More accomplished responses offered an awareness of the ways in which such investment might have 'knock on' effects both positive and negative. Such awareness included Manchester and Glasgow (Commonwealth Games' venues). Other examples included the 'buzz' within the country when there are other high profile events such as the Rugby League, and Rugby Union World Cups, Wimbledon and the Ashes. In addition, less competitive effects were mentioned. These included the development of cycle lanes in a number of cities. and the increased opportunities to access sports by a variety of age groups in a variety of places throughout the UK. A number of candidates commented upon past and future Olympic venues when considering extent. Chiefly these were references to Rio or Beijing. The most successful answers were able to consider both the 'London-centric' nature of investment for the Games in particular, and the 'knock-on' benefits for the UK at large.

With reference to the cultural domain, answers often considered the 'buzz' factor, excitement and increased patriotism in the period leading up to and including the Games. Some were able to cite specific references from their own experience of seeing the torch, being involved in school activities, visiting the Games and also the 'golden post boxes'. Some candidates referred to the power of sport to transcend cultural and individual differences for the common team goal of winning medals and competing. A significant number referred to the tourism opportunities. Others wrote about a growing awareness of differences between cultures which might ultimately lead to a reduction in racism.

Providing examples from the scientific domain was something of a challenge for a number of candidates. Where included, points made reference to developments in testing for performance enhancing substances, improvements in health and fitness, and references to an improved environment as a result of the walking and cycling initiatives. More accomplished responses also referred to the sustainable design and construction of the venues.

Discussions within the social domain generated a number of examples. These included the improvements to housing, transport, and the economy. Some of the specific and relevant examples used included, the green parks, the five new neighbourhoods, improved transport (from the source). Additional 'London' examples were the Lea Valley sports area, and the new Stratford hub and shopping centre. Examples from further afield included the redevelopment of Birmingham New Street station, the rowing and water sports facilities, and the swimming facilities in Manchester, Liverpool and Sheffield. Some candidates were able to offer their own specific experiences. When considering increased participation, the better responses acknowledge the role of the 'volunteer' within community sport and local clubs.

It was inevitable that some candidates wrote about a perceived 'North/South Divide' when considering extent. Other candidates considered the wider view in relation to other parts of the country. The better response also considered the notion that the 'legacy of the games' might wane over time.

Question No.2

The question asked candidates to read the sources and then discuss the issues relating to the disposal of litter. They were then asked to consider the extent to which the government's desire to work towards a 'zero waste economy' was achievable within the UK.

Those candidates who accessed the higher marks were able to offer a range of additional examples. On some occasions these were based upon personal experience and knowledge and on others included examples of practices in other countries. In addition, when considering the issue of extent these candidates were able to consider the steps which may be taken in order to achieve a zero-waste economy together with any possible limitations.

Those candidates producing weaker responses often tended to repeat the source and rarely offered independent examples from their own experience or knowledge. Often these responses failed to consider 'extent' or reserved the last paragraph for a review of their discussion in relation to extent.

The discussion about issues relating to the cultural domain included a wide range of examples. Weaker responses either tended to generalise or referenced the issues of social class, age and attitude in relation to the disposal of litter. The stronger responses often referred to examples from other countries such as Sweden, Germany and India. Others recognised but did not always discuss the 'broken window theory'. In some instances, there was an evaluation about the potential effectiveness of the programmes in other countries.

The scientific domain offered a number of opportunities for discussion. A number of candidates made reference to the issue of the environment and some were then side tracked into a discussion about global warming. Those accessing the higher marks were able to consider the use of waste as a method of generating power. These responses talked about practices in other countries and the potential for future technological development. This discussion included the development of different types of plastic, biodegradable cutlery, cigarette filters, recyclable components within Apple phones and so on. Where there were discussions about landfill these often involved the smell, and the rhetorical question of what would happen when they were full.

Weaker candidates tended to focus their responses around issues from the social domain. Here examples related to costs relating to the removal and collection of waste, the time needed to separate waste, and attitudes of people from different social classes to waste (some suggesting a NIMBY style attitude). Several discussions revolved around the issue of education. Apparently the concept of recycling is new to the older generation who might not understand what is required of them. In addition, there is insufficient education about this issue within schools. Stronger answers recognised the concept of 'make do and mend' and were able to recognise that recycling has evolved. A number talked about the UK selling its waste to other countries for use in the generation of power. The discussion about fines for littering produced a range of comments. Some of these suggested that the fines should be increased; others recognised that to fine 'the poor' for littering would create a 'vicious circle'. Others felt that fines were of no use but that community service as a 'litter picker' was more appropriate. Of great interest to all examiners was the revelation of the numerous and varied practices relating to the collection of domestic waste across the country.

Generally, the conclusion was that a 'zero-waste economy' was a desirable but largely unachievable aim and would probably not be achieved within the lifetime of candidates. When discussed, weaker candidates felt that this was largely due to apathy on the part of the public whereas the more able candidates often suggested steps which might be taken in order to work towards this aim. For a number of candidates this then offered the opportunity to discuss the role of science and technology in achieving this aim.

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)
1 Hills Road
Cambridge
CB1 2EU

OCR Customer Contact Centre

Education and Learning

Telephone: 01223 553998

Facsimile: 01223 552627

Email: general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

www.ocr.org.uk

For staff training purposes and as part of our quality assurance programme your call may be recorded or monitored

Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations
is a Company Limited by Guarantee
Registered in England
Registered Office; 1 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB1 2EU
Registered Company Number: 3484466
OCR is an exempt Charity

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)
Head office
Telephone: 01223 552552
Facsimile: 01223 552553

© OCR 2016

