

Examiners' report

AS LEVEL

GEOGRAPHY

OCR Level 3 Advanced Subsidiary GCE
in Geography

H081

For first teaching in 2016

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Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates.

The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

A full copy of the question paper and the mark scheme can be downloaded from [Teach Cambridge](#).

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Paper 1 series overview

This paper examines the topics of Landscape Systems and Changing Spaces, Making Places, it also includes geographical and fieldwork skills. To do well in this paper, candidates needed to bring in their place-specific information to support the theory they have learnt. Candidates who did well generally used figures and resources throughout their responses.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
- referred to the resources and used data when answering questions - included detailed place-specific information - wrote clearly, in paragraphs, linking back to the question - gave judgements which were supported by evidence - were confident in their use of subject-specific vocabulary.	- wrote about ideas without evidence, either in the form of case study detail or from figures provided - wrote in long paragraphs which lost meaning and direction - had little place-specific detail to support their arguments.

Section A overview

Landscape Systems allows candidates to study one of coastal, glaciated or dryland landscapes. For the fourth year in a row there were no candidates attempting dryland landscapes and, for the first time, coastal landscapes was the only option chosen. The demand of the questions and the skills they assess are designed to be equal across all three options.

Option A overview

All candidates chose to answer the coastal landscapes questions, and many relied on a grounding of GCSE learning before embarking on this. While this means there was secure subject knowledge, there can be a danger of candidates answering questions as if it were a GCSE exam and without the depth required for an AS exam.

Question 1 (a) (i)

Option A – Coastal Landscapes

1

(a) Study **Fig. 1** which shows a coastal landscape in Wales.

(i) Using evidence from **Fig. 1**, identify **three** inputs to the coastal landscape system. [3]

Candidates did well when they clearly used the figure. An understanding of input is important, as there were examples where processes were given, which did not answer the question.

Question 1 (a) (ii)

(ii) Suggest **one** way that waves might influence this coastal landscape system. [4]

For this question candidates must give one way that waves influence the coastal landscape system, which implies there are 3 marks available for development. Encouraging them to ask themselves 'so what?' or consider the phrase 'this means that...' will help them to produce developed ideas.

Assessment for learning



In any question where candidates are asked to suggest **one** idea, in whatever context, there is a requirement that they only talk about one. If a candidate suggested more than one way waves influence the coastal system, only the first idea would have been marked.

Question 1 (b)

(b) Explain the formation of salt marshes.

[8]

The majority correctly identified that saltmarshes form behind a spit, but many candidates only focused on the formation of the spit and described the process of longshore drift. To get full marks they had to focus on thorough knowledge of the formation of the salt marsh.

Question 1 (c)*

(c)* 'Only physical factors influence the formation of landforms within the coastal landscape system.'
Discuss in the context of **one** high energy coastline.

[14]

The essay question is an opportunity to demonstrate thorough knowledge and understanding and strong case study information. Candidates needed to have a strong understanding of the physical factors, such as wind, waves and geology that influence the formation of landforms to start with, before looking at the other factors that impact these environments. These could include the effect of management strategies, economic development such as the building of a port, or climate change as alternative examples. It was also important that candidates were able to effectively identify a high energy coastline.

Section B overview

For Changing Spaces, Making Places, there were a wide range of responses seen. Candidates must apply some abstract concepts of space and place to their specific case study examples. In the specification there are several elements to this topic, such as range of characteristics in shaping place identity, and it is important that candidates have covered them all, to be able to compare and evaluate them, as per the demands of the question.

Question 4 (a)

4

(a) Explain **two** different ways of measuring social inequality.

[4]

Candidates were given a mark for identifying a way to measure social inequality, and a further mark for explaining the link between the measure and social inequality.

Completing a list

If candidates use a list to answer a question, it is helpful when they write each idea on a new line. They may have been used to numbered lists with spaces for answers at GCSE and the answer booklet can be daunting. Making a list can allow candidates to quickly double check they have given the correct number of answers.

Question 4 (b) (i)

(b) Study **Fig. 4A**, which shows government health spending per person for selected countries, 2021.

(i) Using evidence from **Fig. 4A**, identify **one** contrast in government health spending between Europe and sub-Saharan Africa.

[1]

It was pleasing to see that candidates were able to demonstrate strong interpretation skills from this figure and effectively use data.

Question 4 (b) (ii)

(ii) With reference to **Fig. 4A**, suggest **two** possible reasons for variation in government health spending.

[4]

As with Question 4 (a), a mark was given for the possible reason for the variation and a further mark given for the explanation. Candidates did well in identifying that governments had influence in this area. Also, that politics can influence spending decisions for the impact of natural disasters.

Question 4 (c)

- (c) Study **Fig. 4B**, which shows a 1:25 000 OS map extract of Irlam, City of Salford, Greater Manchester.

Using evidence from **Fig. 4B**, explain how flows of money and investment might have helped to shape the place profile of Irlam. [6]

Many candidates were confident in using the OS map extract to answer the question, but it was clear that some did not understand what the map was showing.

Assessment for learning



Map skills are fundamental to geography, and the ability to read an OS map, including accurate use of grid references, is a skill that all centres should be teaching.

Question 4 (d)*

- (d)* 'Making a successful place through rebranding requires more than one type of strategy.' Discuss. [14]

This essay was done effectively when candidates were able to exemplify the impact of rebranding, using a variety of strategies. This may have been in the case of one example where multiple methods were used, like Stratford in London using sport, legacy and flagship strategies, or different places which each used a main type of strategy.

Where candidates used one example to prove or disprove the statement, they struggled to develop their answers. Candidates need to be able to discuss the statement looking at a variety of viewpoints to access the top levels.

Section C overview

This section required candidates to be familiar with fieldwork skills. From the range of responses given, some candidates were able to write with ease and confidence, whereas others seemed more cautious about their suggestions. There is no doubt that engaging in fieldwork in any form is of benefit, and where candidates are involved in the process of planning it, they will be better able to understand sampling, among other skills.

Question 5 (a) (i)

5

(a) Study **Fig. 4B**, which shows a 1:25 000 OS map extract of Irlam, City of Salford, Greater Manchester where a geographical investigation is to be undertaken.

(i) Using evidence from **Fig. 4B**, state and justify an appropriate field research question for investigation in the area shown.

[4]

Candidates were required to base their response on information from the OS map. There is 1 mark available for the suggested investigation question, the question required this to be followed by justification. Given that this question is assessing AO3, there must be evidence from the map, to support the response.

Question 5 (a) (ii)

(ii) Outline **two** difficulties you might encounter in collecting data for your chosen investigation.

[2]

Candidates who had completed fieldwork and were confident in it, were able to secure the marks. They could draw from appropriate difficulties, with collecting data.

Question 5 (b)

(b) Suggest **two** possible advantages of using crowd-sourced data to generate geographical information.

[6]

Most candidates were able to identify that crowd-sourced data would allow them to gather more data in the time frame or from a bigger sample. It is important to remember that candidates were required to give two advantages, therefore separate paragraphs would allow candidates a visual check that they have completed this. Each of the possible advantages also required development to achieve marks.

Question 5 (c)

- (c) With reference to a fieldwork investigation you have carried out, evaluate the techniques you used to analyse the data collected. **[12]**

More successful answers were ones with well-developed ideas throughout where the candidate discusses in detail the techniques, they undertook to analyse the data. Unfortunately, a number of candidates did not focus on the analysis of the data but on the methods used to collect the data, meaning they did not answer the question.

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