

# GCSE GEOGRAPHY A

UNIT 2 / 90302F – Human Geography  
Report on the Examination

---

9030  
June 2014

---

Version: 01

---

---

Further copies of this Report are available from [aqa.org.uk](http://aqa.org.uk)

Copyright © 2014 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered schools/colleges for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to schools/colleges to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

## General

The paper produced a good range of marks, allowing appropriate differentiation between candidates of varying ability. Most candidates responded well to the majority of stimulus material and wrote in continuous prose with a quality of writing that continues to improve. As on the higher tier, the most popular questions remain 1 and 6 with 2 close behind. These three also proved to be the most popular combination. There was an even spread between Questions 4 and 5, with Question 3 infrequently attempted. Rubric offences continue to decline each year, though where they do occur it is often by a candidate attempting all six questions.

Whichever questions were attempted the most successful candidates displayed sound examination technique and had regard for the number of marks available. They also responded to command words and used geographical language to produce structured and tailored responses with appropriate case studies. There was some evidence that there were a significant number of students this year whose command of language might well have allowed them to perform well on the higher tier paper and centres therefore need to give thought to the most appropriate level of entry.

The less successful candidates tended to be careless in skills questions, either making little use of the stimulus material and sources or simply lifting or listing information. They also had limited reference to places, leading to very generic answers, and tended to misunderstand the command words.

It is this failure to respond to the command words that most continues to limit candidates ability to gain marks, particularly 'describe' as opposed to 'explain', and vice versa. Very few indeed understood what was required to answer Questions 1(a)(iii) and 2(a)(iii) for example. Centres might usefully display the [command word document](#) on the AQA Geography subject pages which lists command words and their definitions. As well as the command word, all aspects of the question need to be addressed such as the need to link ICT to globalisation in 5(a)(iv), the need to explain how poorer people can help themselves in 4(d) and supporting multicultural communities in urban areas in 2(c)(iii). These skills benefit from repetition and practice before the exam to increase the candidates' confidence and familiarity.

## SECTION A

### Question 1 Population Change

Question **1(a)(i)** was mainly answered correctly, though there were some interesting variations, with the Butler model a popular alternative. **1(a)(ii)** produced a surprising range of marks despite the clues in the statements though many managed full marks. On the other hand, **1(a)(iii)** was one of the worst answered questions on both tiers with most giving detailed and accurate accounts of the changes in birth and death rates and their impact on the rate of population growth but without any reference to population structure. As in previous years, the concept of population structure is not well known and illustrates the need for candidates to learn subject specific vocabulary more carefully. **1(b)(i)** was a very straightforward skills question and the majority gained full credit; those who did not lacked any accuracy or care (or the possession of a sharp pencil and ruler). **1(b)(ii)** and **1(b)(iii)** were mostly correct, with careless reading of the question or graph seeming to be the cause of any errors. **1(b)(iv)** produced some excellent answers with an equal focus on pro-natalist policies, usually France, and those aimed more directly at the ageing population, usually UK. Some even managed to use recent changes to Chinese policy and link them to ageing. It was this latter aspect that kept many candidates in Level 1 as, whilst they knew the policies well, they were less able to link them to the problem. Positive impacts were identified by the majority of candidates for **1(c)(i)** but most simply stated “taking locals’ jobs” as the negative impact, stating this as a fact which was of course not credited. Candidates responded encouragingly well to the command “outline” in **1(c)(ii)** by providing an elaborated comment, though a significant number wrote about the host rather than source country. **1(c)(iii)** differentiated well between candidates, ranging from those who wrote confidently and accurately about migration to the UK from Poland to those who failed to name countries, therefore remaining in Level 1, or who wrote about migration into the EU, refugees and asylum seekers. Sadly, some answers revealed prejudice and hostility towards migrants and there is perhaps a need for some centres to counteract the effects of the popular press with a more considered approach.

### Question 2 Changing Urban Environments

**2(a)(i)** was mostly correct, though North America was a popular incorrect answer, but less frequently correct was **2(a)(ii)** where many were able to score at least one mark but appeared confused by current and projected figures and the concept of growth rate. As with **1(a)(iii)**, **2(a)(iii)** was very poorly answered with very few gaining any credit by offering descriptions of the differences or assuming that growth rates were higher in richer parts of the world. **2(b)** proved a good discriminator with many good linked answers that covered both air and water pollution well, focusing on smog and specific water-borne diseases. Lower marks came from candidates who were not specific about the type of pollution or who wrote about causes rather than effects. It was very pleasing to see the better candidates supporting their answers with case studies even though they were not explicitly required. **2(c)(i)** produced an equal number of correct and incorrect responses, though the term “segregation” did not seem familiar to many in **2(c)(ii)**. The issue of multiculturalism in **2(c)(iii)** produced much more reasoned and balanced responses than migration in the previous question with answers centring around places of worship and education and the best again basing their answers in exemplars, which is a pleasing development. Candidates might be encouraged to display similar levels of tolerance in their approach to migration. Both questions **2(d)(i)** and **2(d)(ii)** produced rather vague answers with many candidates mixing the feature and reason for decline along with rather generalised comments that did not relate to CBD, with some writing about the CBD as a residential environment. The suggested improvements in **2(d)(iii)** proved more successful with answers covering pedestrianisation and improving the physical

appearance. Whilst there was no requirement for a case study in either the question or the specification the better answers avoided a “geography of nowhere” and were rooted in real places that the students understood.

### Question 3 Changing Rural Environments

Whilst very much less popular, answer to these questions exhibited the same positives and negatives as others. Despite their intended ease as an entry into the question, answers to **3(a)(i)** and **3(a)(ii)** were both very variable, with few gaining full marks. Candidates should be reminded with true / false and cloze procedures that careful reading is still required to check for sense as these are marks that can be gained with care and attention as much as knowledge and they should look to capitalise on this opportunity. **3(a)(iii)** was poorly answered with many answers centring on loss of land as a result of urban sprawl rather than the effects of out-migration. Lack of knowledge of a named policy hindered access to marks in **3(b)(i)** with many generalised statements, a theme that was carried into **3(b)(ii)** with many superficial answers about encouraging farmers to consider the environment. Still fewer used the photograph, which showed a hedgerow on a farm in a stewardship agreement, despite the wide variety of aspects it provided for comment. This issue of candidates failing to make it clear that they used the resources provided through explicit reference remains persistent and centres need to train their candidates to do so. Similarly superficial were the answers to **3(c)** where few candidates gained Level 2 because they could not identify the effects of global competition or supermarkets and produced vague answers about farmers being under pressure and low paid. This is a widely reported topical issue where the potential for relation to local real world examples seems under-exploited. Second homes were much more familiar territory and candidates were able to correctly define them in **3(d)(i)** and locate them in **3(d)(ii)**. In both **3(d)(iii)** and **3(d)(iv)** many candidates missed the second mark available for elaborating on their initial statement. Candidates should be reminded that where two marks are available, as a general principle they will need to reinforce their comment with reasons or exemplification to access the second mark.

---

## SECTION B

### Question 4 The Development Gap

The correct answer for **4(a)(i)** was known by the great majority of candidates, though surprisingly few were able to follow this through in **4(a)(ii)** for all three marks, again illustrating the need for full attention and not dismissing such exercises as too simple. In **4(a)(iii)** most candidates had the idea of poorer countries being unfairly treated and gained some credit but were less able to develop their comment for the second mark. Most also knew what distinguished charitable from other types of aid in **4(b)** and were able to offer some generic advantages of aid but lacked specificity for the full marks. There also remained the perennial confusion between trade and aid in a significant number of answers. This clarification of terminology was further revealed as an issue for centres to consider in **4(c)(i)** and **4(c)(ii)** where the two terms were widely confused or inadequately differentiated so that very few candidates gained full marks. The best answers were able to select a relevant indicator and then use it to make an informed comment about quality of life or standard of living. There was also a good deal of restating the question which could not be credited. In **4(d)** many answers used Figure 9 and equally many used their own knowledge, though few progressed beyond Level 1 as this was rarely concurrent. This was a shame as some excellent understanding was shown along with detailed knowledge of various schemes, but candidates should be reminded that they must read the question carefully and follow all the instructions given. There were very few incorrect answers to **4(e)(i)** and **4(e)(ii)**. Part **4(e)(iii)** proved more challenging and was frequently answered without reference to named countries which therefore resulted in very generic answers. Countries were often described separately which did not lend itself to contrast and sometimes countries at very similar levels of development were chosen. Whilst this latter may well have been due to candidates themselves acting under pressure it occurred frequently enough to suggest that some centres should check the case studies they use when teaching this to ensure adequate contrast, and that the skill of contrasting should also be practiced further too.

### Question 5 Globalisation

Both **5(a)(i)** and **5(a)(ii)** were well answered with many candidates gaining full marks. Most answers for **5(a)(iii)** used statements 1 or 3 with virtually none using statement 4. As with similar questions elsewhere on the paper most scored one mark but fewer were able to elaborate for the second mark. The majority of answers to **5(a)(iv)** achieved Level 1 marks but fewer progressed further because their answers were rather generalised about communications technology or were not able to progress beyond the idea of instant contact via the internet. Careless completion meant that some candidates lost marks needlessly on **5(b)**. However, the majority were correct and similarly answers to **5(b)(ii)** needed more care from candidates as many ticked one box correctly but fewer got both correct. **5(b)(iii)** produced a very variable quality of answers. Some simply described the growth or strayed into impacts and a few took the opportunity to write about the one child policy whilst the better answers focused on low wages and lack of health and safety and there was some reference to SEZs and the Olympic effect. **5(c)(i)** produced a mark for most as did **5(c)(ii)**, though the latter did produce some generalised answers clearly made without reference to the photograph. Candidates must be reminded it is in their interest to study photographs when they are provided as they contain at least part of the answer sought and sometimes, as in this case, are intended to help with guiding candidates along a line of thought into subsequent questions. Thus in **5(c)(iii)** the question moved on to social and economic impacts but some candidates continued with environmental. More frequently, the majority who remained in Level 1 did so because they did not progress beyond basic stated points. Those few who took the opportunity to use a case study frequently reached Level 2, showing the value of using place

knowledge to illustrate ideas even though this is not explicitly required, an approach which should be encouraged.

### Question 6 Tourism

**6(a)(i)** produced a very mixed response with most gaining a mark and many two marks, the obstacle to higher attainment being either the first statement or the lack of any “global” element in the answers. Overlap and repetition of the previous answers prevented some from gaining a mark in **6(a)(ii)** though the majority were correct, as they were also in **6(b)(i)**. Few candidates who attempted **6(b)(ii)** did not gain any credit, but many remained in Level 1 because they simply listed or described the features shown, many clearly only looking at the key judging from the numbers they quoted of certain features, without linking these to development as a tourist destination. This was disappointing given that the same comment was made in last year’s report about the basic way the Ordnance Survey map was used in Question 6 in the 2013 exam, with little sense of an improvement this year. Candidates must be encouraged to respond to the whole question and should realise that if four marks are available they will need to offer some development to their answers and they should be looking to see what that development is. The definition of mass tourism in **6(c)(i)** was well known and the flow diagram in **6(c)(ii)** frequently yielded full marks also. The majority made appropriate use of the photograph in **6(c)(iii)** and more were able to elaborate upon it than in many equivalently worded questions. Those who were able to move beyond “more litter bins”, which was not credited but was unfortunately quite common, in **6(c)(iv)** made plentiful realistic suggestions and scored well. Weaker responses to **6(d)(i)** restated the question but an equal number were able to give a relevant response. Those who knew and used the correct *extreme* environment case study in **6(d)(ii)** went on to score well. Many drifted into management of tourism or were very generic in their references to the ubiquitous litter and animals eating plastic bags rather than being specific with regard to their chosen habitats. Candidates should also be advised to take care with the learning of detail as polar bears frequently migrated to Antarctica, penguins to the Arctic, and many tourists drive to Antarctica and melt the ice caps as a consequence of their emissions.

### Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.

### Converting Marks into UMS marks

Convert raw marks into Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) marks by using the link below.

[UMS conversion calculator](#)

