Qualification Accredited

OCR
Oxford Cambridge and RSA

GCSE (9-1)

Examiners' report

GEOGRAPHY A (GEOGRAPHICAL THEMES)

J383

For first teaching in 2016

J383/01 Summer 2023 series

Version 1

ocr.org.uk/geography

Contents

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. A selection of candidate answers is also provided. 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 OCR.

Paper 1 series overview

Paper 1, Living in the UK today, covers aspects of the human, physical and environmental geography of the UK. For candidates to be successful they needed to:

- have a working knowledge of the general geography of the UK
- know the content as displayed in the specification, including key geographical terms. The examination questions are derived from the specification, so the candidates need to know it well
- practice how to write a clear and precise geographical explanation
- apply case study knowledge and understanding
- learn how to respond to higher order command words such as evaluate
- practice using and interpretating all the geographical skills, particularly graphs, in the specification, in preparation for this component (the first of three components).

The paper in this series differentiated well in that examiners saw the full range of marks. The majority of candidates found the paper accessible and it is clear they had been well prepared. Most candidates managed to complete their responses in the hour allowed. However, a reasonably significant number of scripts contained evidence of little attempt to respond to any questions on the paper.

There were many examples of high-level responses, particularly in the three level response questions, with candidates in the main making a good attempt to develop their points. The skills of evaluation in Questions 1 (c) and 3 (c) still remains an area for candidates to work on. They need to either move beyond the idea of advantages and disadvantages, using simple statements such as ' I agree to a large extent….' or implicit evaluation which require some interpretation by the examiner.

Given that this paper contained questions requiring the completion of a graph or a calculation, candidates should be properly equipped. Indeed, for all three papers in this specification, not only should they need a black biro, but also an HB pencil, a ruler and a calculator. Without all of these items it was more difficult to make a successful response to Questions 3 (b) (i) and (ii).

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
• showed good knowledge of the geographical terms used in the specification, such as biological weathering, sustainable strategies, reservoir and suburbanisation • developed their explanations beyond simple statements • applied their understanding to unfamiliar contexts (photographs in this case) • clearly explained links between two parts of the question. For example, geomorphic processes and coastal landforms, and influences on a city's character • showed competent and accurate statistical and graphical skills • understood how to use the higher order thinking required to evaluate and make judgements.	• confused weathering with erosion • wrote about incorrect contexts, e.g. river versus coastal landscape • did not specify where they were describing. For example, which part of a city, or up/downstream of a dam • found it difficult to interpret generic words used in the specification, which appeared in questions, e.g. modify, consequences, character, factor • did not complete a pie chart accurately using the key.

Question 1 (a) (i)

1 (a) (i) Look at **Fig. 1** in the Resource Booklet, which shows a landscape at Carding Mill, Shropshire.

Describe how the landscape shown in **Fig. 1** is characteristic of an upland environment.

.....

.....

.....

..... **[2]**

Most candidates responded to this question well by accurately applying their knowledge of upland environments to the photograph. Many correctly identified features such as a v-shaped valley, interlocking spurs, a small river or a rocky landscape.

An upland environment is different from other environments

Candidates struggled to gain marks where their response was generic and not specific to an upland area, e.g. 'river' or 'vegetation.'

Question 1 (a) (ii)

(ii) Define the term **biological weathering**.

.....

.....

.....

..... **[2]**

Many candidates knew the meaning of the term in generic terms but were not clear about its definition. Two clear elements were required, the idea of rocks breaking down and the causes of this. The latter, for example, means roots growing into cracks or animals burrowing; in other words, some kind of action, not merely being there.

Misconception

Some responses were confused about the meaning of the term weathering and described the weather or erosion.

Question 1 (b)

(b) Explain how different types of **erosion** affect river channels.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

..... **[4]**

Some candidates knew and were able to explain how types of erosion processes operate even if they did not name them. The key link in the question was how erosion affects river channels and many responses did this accurately, showing how the channel width or depth increases, or the influence on channel landform such as meanders and waterfalls.

Some candidates made these links clearly. Others struggled to specifically explain how the different erosion types affected river channels.

Misconception

Some responses confused abrasion with attrition while others confused river erosion with coastal erosion or even deposition.

Question 1 (c)*

(c)* CASE STUDY

A UK coastal landscape

Name of coastal landscape area in the UK .....

Evaluate the impact of geomorphic processes on the **formation** of landforms in your chosen coastal landscape. **[12]**

Spelling, punctuation and grammar and the use of specialist terminology **[3]**

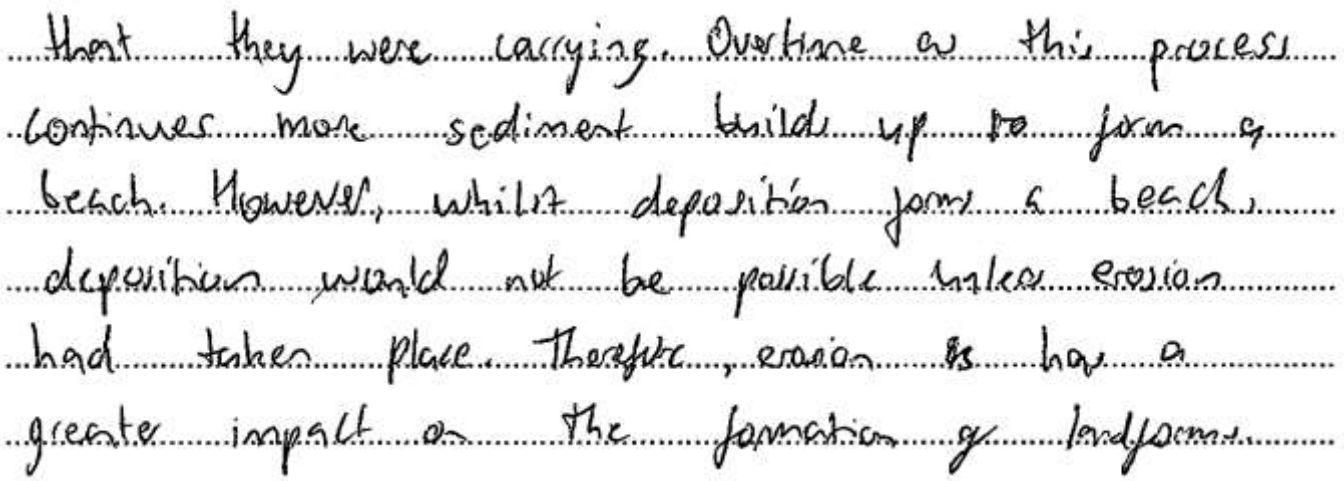
In this question, the most common case studies were Holderness, Dorset/Jurassic Coast and North Norfolk. In successful responses, candidates fully explained at least two geomorphic processes rather than just naming them. These responses could also clearly demonstrate how these processes were responsible for the formation of at least two landforms such as cliffs, headlands, bays and stacks. These responses were often supported by accurate place specific detail which might include the local names of landforms, size of landforms, local rock types and names of oceans/seas or nearby towns.

Some candidates attempted to explicitly evaluate the importance of different processes. This might have involved the relative importance of erosion and deposition, or the key role of transportation such as longshore drift. It might also have involved the role of other factors relative to geomorphic processes, such as wave energy, rock type, human activities and coastal management strategies. In all cases, the key element was to explain the impact of these processes and factors on the formation of landforms in the chosen coastal landscape.

The focus of the question is the coastal landscape

Some responses focused on coastal management, with little mention of the landscape. These responses tended to explain the impacts of erosion on property and people, rather than on the landscape itself.

Exemplar 1



The response above contains the elements of a more successful response. The key geomorphic process is deposition and the landform resulting from this is a beach (named). In addition to explaining how the loss of energy of waves results in sediment being deposited on a beach, there are also examples of evaluation. Firstly, the role of constructive waves and a sheltered bay as a factor other than deposition in the formation of a beach. Secondly, the recognition that without erosion, the sediment would not be available deposition to form a beach.

Question 2 (a) (iii)

(iii) Suggest **two** sustainable strategies to overcome one or more challenges in cities.

1 .....

.....

.....

2 .....

.....

.....

[4]

Many of the higher performing responses focused on the challenges that are listed in the specification: housing, transport and waste. Others suggested strategies such as planting trees or using renewable energy. These strategies needed to be sustainable. Building more houses was not viewed in these terms unless, for example, they were built on brownfield sites or with a high degree of affordability. Sustainable strategies should focus on the long-term as well as the present, and/or they should focus on anything which attempts to balance socio-economic and environmental needs; here there is a clear overlap with Paper 2.

Exemplar 2

1 The installation of cleaner energy sources like solar panels on the roofs of all newly constructed homes to reduce air pollution and improve health

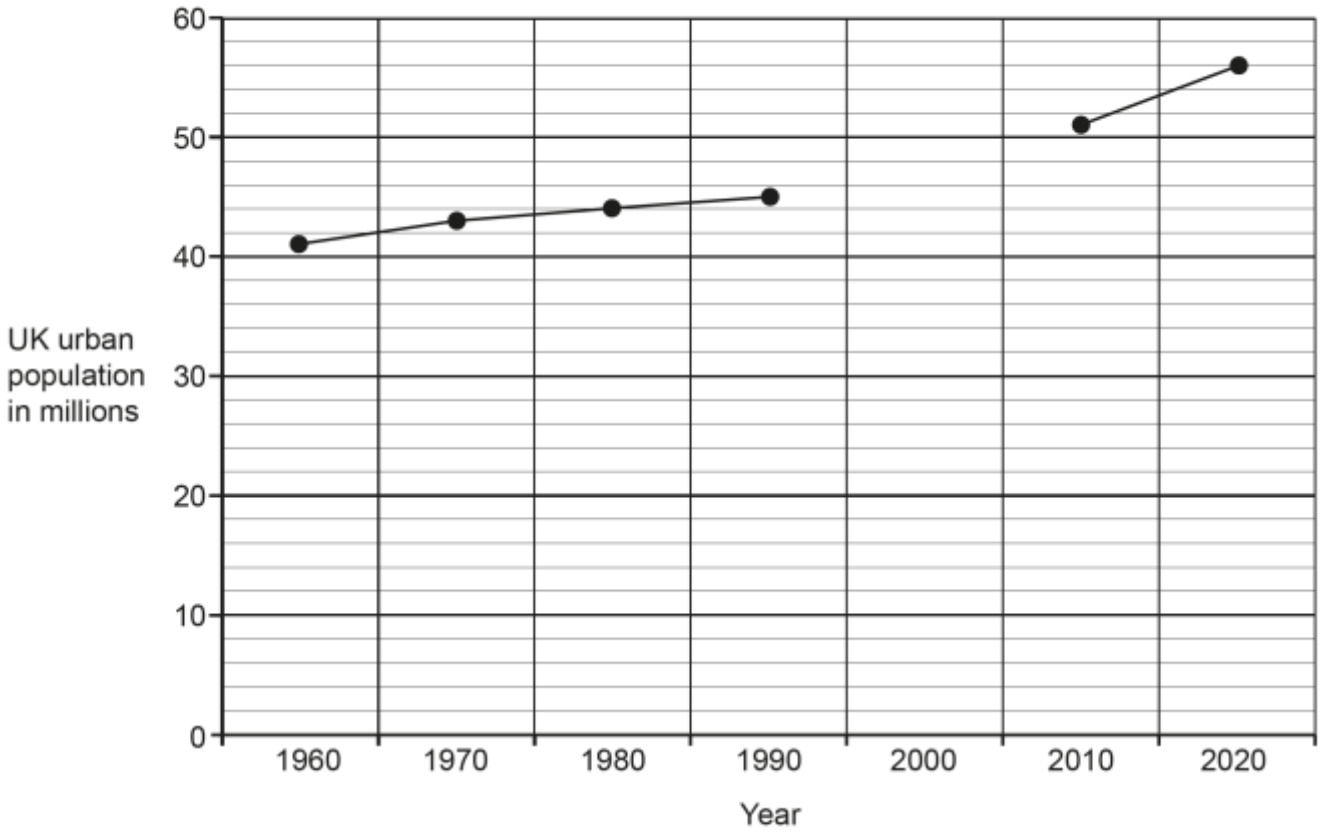
2 Investment in more public transport networks like busways to decrease the need for cars to reduce congestion on the streets making them safer and reducing harmful emissions.

Deposition also helps to form landforms, such as Swansea beach. Waves flow into a sheltered bay (Swansea Bay), and then lose energy. This makes them into constructive waves. When they reach & run out of energy they deposit the sediment

This response actually goes slightly beyond the level of development required for full marks. The two suggested strategies are cleaner energy sources and more public transport, each of which gain one mark. The development (DEV) for each point highlights the key elements of 'sustainable' strategies. For the first strategy, both health and air pollution are addressed, while in the second, keeping people safe and reducing emissions are mentioned. In both cases, both social and environmental needs are met.

Question 2 (b) (i)

(b) The line graph below shows changes in the UK's urban population from 1960 to 2020.



(i) Use the data from the table below to complete the graph.

Year	Urban population
2000	46 million

[1]

As with many graph questions in this component's previous series, a significant number of candidates did not attempt the question. While most who did completed the graph accurately, a minority did not locate the dot on the correct horizontal line (46 million), while some did not complete the line on the graph appropriately.

Question 2 (b) (iii)

(iii) Explain **two** consequences of suburbanisation.

1 .....

.....

.....

2 .....

.....

.....

[4]

Higher performing responses tended to focus on the environmental consequences of traffic congestion or the socio-economic consequences of rising property prices. A significant number of candidates were not clear on the location which they were writing about (i.e. suburbs, inner city or rural area). Therefore, they did not gain marks when describing the negative consequences leading to dereliction or effects on businesses unless they were clear about the location. If candidates were clear about this, the 'hollowing out' of the city centre yielded some good explanations.

Misconception

'Crime' and 'overcrowding' were frequent responses which were generic and inaccurate. Other responses were under the misconception that suburban areas lacked services such as schools and supermarkets.

Question 2 (c)

(c) **CASE STUDY**

Major city in the UK

Name of major UK city: .....

A city's character is influenced by the culture, ethnicity and leisure activities of its population.

Explain how **one or more** influences, such as those stated above, have impacted on the character of your chosen city.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

..... **[6]**

The cities most commonly chosen for this case study included London, Manchester, Oxford, Cambridge, Birmingham, Leeds and Liverpool.

Many responses were clear about the influences such as immigration or studentification, and higher performing responses developed how these impacted on the character of the city. These responses were supported by clear and accurate place specific detail.

Other responses might focus on the academic nature of Oxford or Cambridge, the pull of those cites for study and scientific research and how this has shaped some of the actual aspects of the city's character. In other words, the candidate ensures that the city is projected as a place of influence, interest and excitement, supported by place specific detail. It would be equally effective to select, for example, football in Manchester, music in Liverpool, the legacy of 2012 in East London or diversity in Leicester. For the latter, buildings, festivals, restaurants and other features result from the increase in ethnic and religious diversity.

Many responses lacked meaningful context and could have applied to any city, particularly those concerning the influence of immigration. These responses said little more than immigrants 'bringing their culture and ethnicity, their own clothes and shops'. Few mentioned festivals, the benefits and challenges of multiculturalism or named areas of cities where specific groups settled.

What is the examiner looking for in a question about a city's character?

Responses which created a concise but vivid image to the uninformed reader of the character of the chosen city were more successful.

Question 3 (a) (i)

3 (a) (i) State **three** ways in which environments and ecosystems are **modified** by reservoirs.

1 .....

.....

2 .....

.....

3 .....

.....

[3]

More successful responses referred to impacts on fish migration patterns, changes to water flow downstream and the impact of dam construction on the immediate environment.

It was clear that some candidates did not know what a reservoir was. Others gave generic comments about 'destroying habitats' without giving any context. Less successful responses tended to give generalised responses about modifications to ecosystems or flooding risks without a clear idea of where this was happening. For example, 'less flooding' on its own does not provide the necessary context.

Assessment for learning

In component 1.3, UK Environmental Challenges, it is tempting to focus on flooding and energy. Remember to focus on the less obvious parts of this component, such as water supply.

In this question, the content being assessed is 'reservoirs and water transfer schemes to supply water' as part of the key idea 'Humans can modify and change ecosystems and environments to obtain food, energy and water.'

Question 3 (a) (ii)

(ii) Look at **Fig. 3** in the Resource Booklet, which shows the impacts of commercial fishing.

Using information from **Fig. 3**, suggest impacts of commercial fishing on the environment.

.....

.....

.....

.....

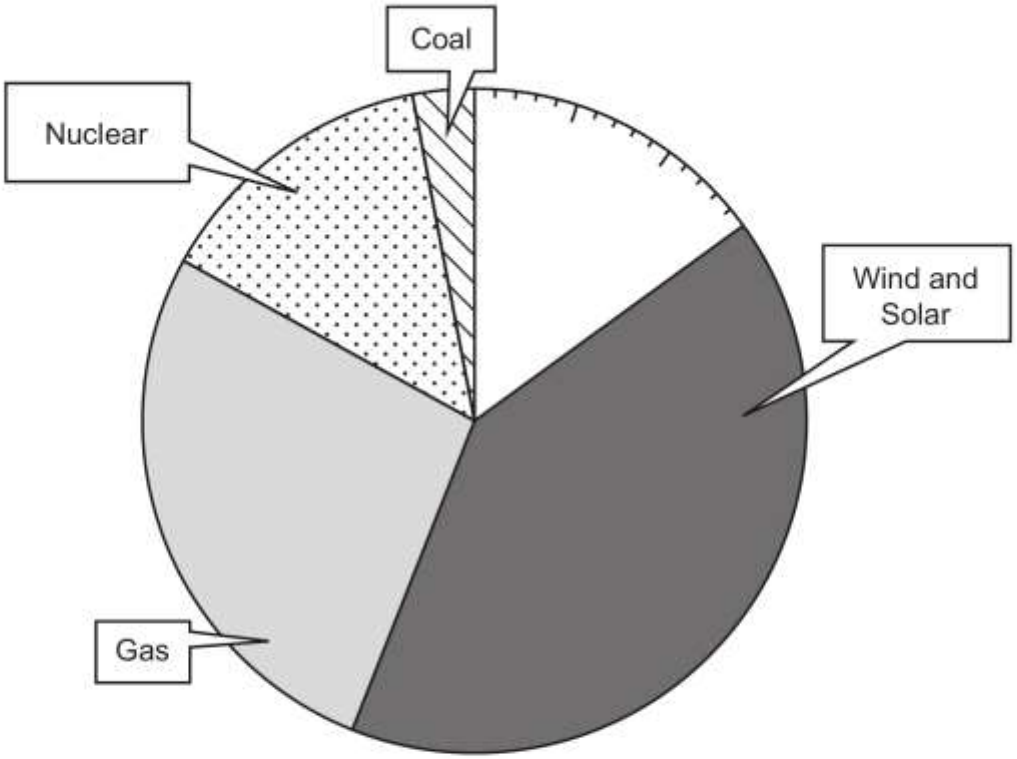
.....

..... **[4]**

Responses to this question were generally very good, with many candidates using the different photographs effectively to suggest the environmental impacts of commercial fishing. This included nets ending up as waste in the sea/onshore, the problems of by-catch, the wider effects on marine ecosystems and the problems of overfishing.

Question 3 (b) (i)

(b) The pie chart below shows how electricity was generated in the UK in 2020.



(i) Use the data from the table below to **complete** the pie chart.

Type of energy	% of UK energy generation (2020)	Shading
Biofuel	9%	
Imported Fuel	6%	

[2]

Some candidates were given full marks for accurately drawing a line to divide the two segments on the graph and using the key to draw horizontal lines for the 'imported fuel' segment. Many candidates did not achieve full marks on this question, either by not attempting it, by drawing the line inaccurately, or more commonly not using horizontal lines (or anything) for shading the 'imported fuel' segment as shown in the key.

Question 3 (b) (ii)

(ii) In the year 2000, the amount of energy produced using gas was 145 Terrawatt hours. By 2019, this had decreased to 130 Terrawatt hours.

Calculate the percentage **decrease** in gas used to produce energy between 2000 and 2019.

Give your answer to **two** decimal places.

You **must** show your working.

..... % **[2]**

Many accurate responses were provided, often with different methods to get to the correct response. These candidates divided the actual difference in Terrawatt hours between 2000 and 2019 (15) by the original number in 2000 (145), and then converted this figure into a percentage. Quite often, candidates who decided to divide 130 by 145 did not subtract the result from 100.

Some candidates managed to reach the correct final answer despite errors in their working.

Others did not give their response to two decimal places as requested.

Overall, many candidates found this question challenging and were not sure of the calculations needed to calculate percentage decrease.

Question 3 (c)*

(c)* 'Environmental factors are **more important** than political factors in affecting the UK's future energy supply.'

To what extent do you agree?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

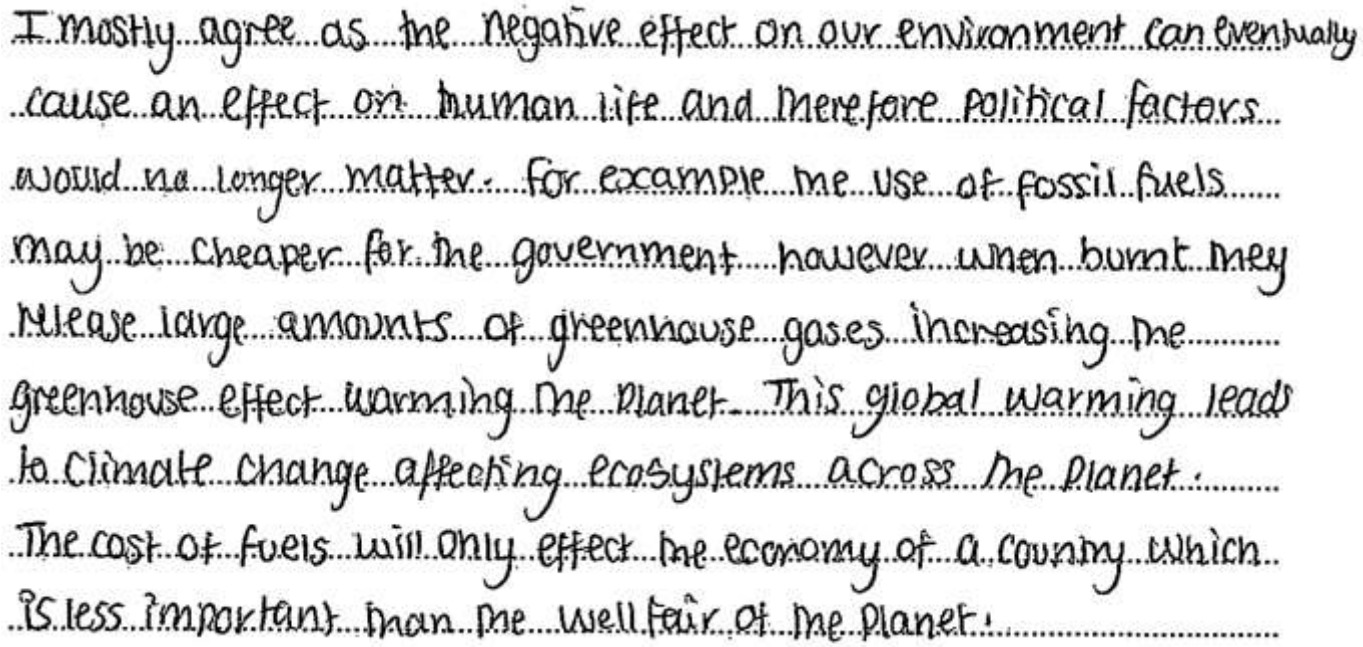
..... **[8]**

Typically, more successful responses had a very good grasp of the factors likely to affect the UK's future energy supply and were able to provide a balanced response that looked at renewable energy, energy security (frequently highlighting the Russia/Ukraine conflict's effect on supply and prices) and the impact of burning fossil fuels on global warming.

There was a very wide range of responses to this question due to the phrase 'environmental factors' being interpreted in many different ways. Where candidates simply discussed the environmental impacts of energy supply, these responses were usually less successful.

Responses were often imbalanced with more emphasis on environmental factors than political ones, and arguments over costs were not always clear. A few showed good knowledge of international agreements and UK government policies towards fracking or oil exploration for example and the target to be carbon neutral by 2050. Pressure groups and the Green Party were rarely mentioned.

Exemplar 3


I mostly agree as the negative effect on our environment can eventualy cause an effect on human life and therefore political factors would no longer matter. For example the use of fossil fuels may be cheaper for the government however when burnt they release large amounts of greenhouse gases increasing the greenhouse effect warming the planet. This global warming leads to climate change affecting ecosystems across the planet. The cost of fuels will only effect the economy of a county which is less important than the well fair of the planet.

The section from the response above has both the required elements of higher performance indicative of Level 3, understanding of the factors plus evaluation and judgement. The first sentence is the judgement which is more than a basic statement as there is some reasoning. The understanding comes in the middle section which considers both environmental and political factors: use of fossil fuels, cheaper for the government, greenhouse effect, effects on ecosystems. The final sentence is evaluation, the importance of the welfare of the planet over the cost of fuels (energy).

Supporting you

Teach Cambridge

Make sure you visit our secure website **Teach Cambridge** to find the full range of resources and support for the subjects you teach. This includes secure materials such as set assignments and exemplars, online and on-demand training.

Don't have access? If your school or college teaches any OCR qualifications, please contact your exams officer. You can forward them this link to help get you started.

Reviews of marking

If any of your students' results are not as expected, you may wish to consider one of our post-results services. For full information about the options available visit the OCR website.

Access to Scripts

For the June 2023 series, Exams Officers will be able to download copies of your candidates' completed papers or 'scripts' for all of our General Qualifications including Entry Level, GCSE and AS/A Level. Your centre can use these scripts to decide whether to request a review of marking and to support teaching and learning.

Our free, on-demand service, Access to Scripts is available via our single sign-on service, My Cambridge. Step-by-step instructions are on our website.

Keep up-to-date

We send a monthly bulletin to tell you about important updates. You can also sign up for your subject specific updates. If you haven't already, sign up here.

OCR Professional Development

Attend one of our popular CPD courses to hear directly from a senior assessor or drop in to a Q&A session. Most of our courses are delivered live via an online platform, so you can attend from any location.

Please find details for all our courses for your subject on **Teach Cambridge**. You'll also find links to our online courses on NEA marking and support.

Signed up for ExamBuilder?

ExamBuilder is the question builder platform for a range of our GCSE, A Level, Cambridge Nationals and Cambridge Technicals qualifications. Find out more.

ExamBuilder is **free for all OCR centres** with an Interchange account and gives you unlimited users per centre. We need an Interchange username to validate the identity of your centre's first user account for ExamBuilder.

If you do not have an Interchange account please contact your centre administrator (usually the Exams Officer) to request a username, or nominate an existing Interchange user in your department.

Active Results

Review students' exam performance with our free online results analysis tool. It is available for all GCSEs, AS and A Levels and Cambridge Nationals.

Find out more.

Need to get in touch?

If you ever have any questions about OCR qualifications or services (including administration, logistics and teaching) please feel free to get in touch with our customer support centre.

Call us on
01223 553998

Alternatively, you can email us on
support@ocr.org.uk

For more information visit
ocr.org.uk/qualifications/resource-finder
ocr.org.uk
facebook.com/ocrexams
twitter.com/ocrexams
instagram.com/ocrexaminations
linkedin.com/company/ocr
youtube.com/ocrexams

We really value your feedback

Click to send us an autogenerated email about this resource. Add comments if you want to. Let us know how we can improve this resource or what else you need. Your email address will not be used or shared for any marketing purposes.

I like this **I dislike this**

Please note – web links are correct at date of publication but other websites may change over time. If you have any problems with a link you may want to navigate to that organisation's website for a direct search.

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS & ASSESSMENT