



External Assessment Report 2010

Subject	Geography
Level	Standard Grade

The statistics used in this report are pre-appeal.

This report provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers/lecturers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding. It would be helpful to read this report in conjunction with the published question papers and marking instructions for the Examination.

Comments on candidate performance

General comments

Performance of candidates at Credit level was excellent. Performance at General level was rather more disappointing. This perhaps was due to a number of factors. First, the Credit level performance had a knock-on effect on those candidates who had managed to upgrade their award at Grade 3 to Credit level, thus leaving fewer awards at the lower level. Secondly, for many weaker Foundation/General candidates, bridging the gap between levels 5 and 4 can prove very difficult. This is due mainly to the demands of the General level exam.

At this level, candidates require an ability to express themselves in extended written answers, as well as their knowledge and skills. In effect, candidates at General level are split into two cohorts, namely those who are genuine General candidates and those who are fundamentally Foundation candidates. At Foundation level, performance was also highly commendable. Few candidates failed to attempt all of the questions set in the paper.

It was evident from Markers' reports that the improvement in the standard of written response continues and that centres appear to be following the advice contained in the External Assessment Reports in terms of preparing their candidates for the examination.

Areas in which candidates performed well

At Credit level, the questions in which candidates performed well included:

- ◆ Question 1 (a) (route of the Fife coastal path)
- ◆ Question 1 (c) (present day function of Dunfermline)
- ◆ Question 1 (f) (advantage of the location of Rosyth Europarc)
- ◆ Question 3 (similarities and differences of anticyclones – summer and winter)
- ◆ Question 5 (Menie estate)
- ◆ Question 9 (population growth in India)

At General level, the questions in which candidates performed well included:

- ◆ Question 1 (a) (cross-section)
- ◆ Questions 3 (a) and 3 (b) (identifying climates and describing the main features of the equatorial rainforest climate)
- ◆ Question 7 (a) (completion of population pyramid)

At Foundation level, candidates performed best in the following questions:

- ◆ Question 1 (a) (matching settlement types)
- ◆ Question 1 (d) (matching grid references to physical features on the OS map)
- ◆ Question 1 (g) (naming tourist features in Alyth)
- ◆ Question 1 (h) (matching grid references to river features)

- ◆ Question 1 (i) (gathering techniques)
- ◆ Question 2 (a) (describing weather changes)
- ◆ Question 2 (b) (wind rose)
- ◆ Question 3 (b) (desert climate features)
- ◆ Question 5 (b) (location factors of a modern settlement)
- ◆ Question 9 (population density)
- ◆ Question 10 (a) (migration from Poland to UK)
- ◆ Question 13 (types of aid)

At all three levels, candidates displayed a high standard of answers to Ordnance Survey questions, particularly at Credit and Foundation levels.

Areas which candidates found demanding

At Credit level, candidates found the following questions demanding:

- ◆ Question 4 (causes of desertification)
- ◆ Question 7 (changing sources of a farmer's income)
- ◆ Questions 10 (a) and 10 (b) (patterns of trade in developing countries/processing techniques – export figures)

At General level, candidates had difficulty with:

- ◆ Question 1 (b)(ii) (formation of selected glacial features)
- ◆ Question 4 (a) (advantages/disadvantages of location of selected developments – many candidates wrongly chose to discuss Bargeddie suburban village)
- ◆ Question 4 (b) (land use gathering techniques)
- ◆ Question 8 (processing techniques – many candidates discussed the technique shown in the illustration, ie pie charts rather than 'other' techniques)
- ◆ Question 9 (tariffs on developing countries exports – many candidates did not understand the term 'tariff').

At Foundation level, candidates had difficulty with:

- ◆ Question 1 (b) (ancient settlement map features)
- ◆ Question 7 (b) (disadvantages of location of industrial estate)

Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

As in the 2009 report, it was encouraging to see that many centres have taken on board advice offered in previous reports. This advice largely related to ensuring that candidates read the instructions at the beginning of questions, avoided simply listing or lifting information in illustrations with additional comments, described or explained when required

to do so, provided good examples in their answers, and at General level used the number of lines provided as a guide to the length of their answers.

Unfortunately, at General level when answering techniques questions, a significant number of candidates gave often inappropriate rote-type answers. Many also repeated the same reasons for choosing different techniques. This was less evident in answers to these types of questions at Credit level.

Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2009	17746
Number of resulted entries in 2010	16895

Statistical information: performance of candidates

Distribution of overall awards

Grade 1	28.3%
Grade 2	24.6%
Grade 3	15.5%
Grade 4	12.3%
Grade 5	11.3%
Grade 6	6.2%
Grade 7	1.8%
No award	0.0%

Grade boundaries for each assessable element in the subject included in the report

Assessable Element	Credit Max Mark	Grade Boundaries		General Max Mark	Grade Boundaries		Foundation Max Mark	Grade Boundaries	
		1	2		3	4		5	6
KU	32	22	14	28	18	14	24	17	12
ES	48	34	24	42	22	17	36	24	17