



Question & Answer document

Higher Geography webinar

Q 1 Can analysis be explaining why something might be happening? For example ‘the reason air cools as altitude increases is due to adiabatic cooling’, then the candidate does on to explain this process?

A1 We would be looking for candidates to take a finding, and explain this with relevance to their own results as opposed to relying on background knowledge; to analyse why this is the case for their particular assignment as opposed to background knowledge about theory to use one of their findings to explain another. If a candidate were merely to explain adiabatic cooling then a KU mark may be awarded. To be awarded an analysis mark, the candidate should make links to their particular study – referring to the example above, this could be analysis if candidate refers to their own temperature readings on their hillside.

Q 2 In section D how does a candidate link their findings to KU ie river speed and Bradshaw’s Model? Are you looking for candidates to explain anomalies that may prevent the model being reflected i.e. canalised sections of a river or construction of a weir.

A 2 This will depend on the candidate’s findings; if they find an anomaly and can give some explanation for this in relation to their own river then this would be an analytical mark.

Q 3 For methodology - can a candidate use two websites as long as they critically evaluate them separately?

A 3 The marking instructions ask for two research *methods* – using a website is one method, so it would be better to use two methods rather than two sources.

Q 4 In the conclusion do candidates just refer back to initial aims so no new information is needed?

A 4 Candidates here should be referring back to aims; not introducing new information. They should be drawing on findings however, not merely going back to

aim and saying yes or no. They should pick out some findings to prove whether or not their aim has been met.

Q 5 There are some myths about KU - is Higher level knowledge enough or do they need to evidence research?

A 5 No higher level knowledge is enough – therefore if it's something learned in class that's fine, it doesn't need to be evidenced in the assignment.

Q 6 Are sub heading a good idea? I have always discouraged pupils from using them

A 6 Sub headings are fine. If they help a candidate to structure their work they should use them; they would not be penalised for using them. Equally candidates can have very well structured assignments without them. Their use or otherwise is entirely up to the candidate.

Q 7 Would the inclusion of sub- headings gain the mark for structure?

A 7 The use of sub-headings may help a candidate to gain a mark for structure; but their use on its own would not be enough. The sub-headings need to reflect a coherent structure.

Q 8 Can the candidate therefore pick up marks for the 3 techniques if used, or would you just take the two highest scoring?

A 8 No – candidates are only awarded marks for two techniques; where a candidate writes about more than two, markers would mark all of these, then award the marks for the two highest scoring techniques.

Q 9 How could the timing of the traffic survey gain a mark in the methods section?

A 9 This could be relevant if the candidate went on to analyse how the time of day was important i.e. some candidate look at how traffic varies at a time of day over the course of for example of a week

Q 10 Could candidates gain a mark for discussing more generalised limitations like saying that the RM is quantitative, qualitative, primary, secondary etc.?

A 10 Yes – but candidates should not leave it as a general limitation; they should put it into the context of their study. This should not be a rote learned list of limitations, but should be relevant to their chosen techniques.

Q 11 Can candidates pick up technique marks throughout their assignment even if it is not in the 'right' section?

A 11 Yes, marks will be awarded wherever the candidate makes them. Some candidates for example write about the limitations of techniques in their conclusion which is fine.

Candidates will be awarded all marks wherever they occur – for example some candidates may open with a conclusion. Where this distracts from the flow of an assignment however, it may affect coherence or structure of the assignment and a mark may be lost here, however candidates are not penalised twice if this is the case.

Q 12 By talking about the bus stops is that not using your personal knowledge rather than something evidenced in the assignment?

A 12 If the candidate has observed bus spots on filed work then it is a relevant back up for an analytical point.

Q 13 Can we use these scripts with pupils?

A 13 The US materials are on the open web-site and available to candidates. If using as a teaching resource, it may be better perhaps to choose an assignment which is not identical to one your pupils are likely to be doing to avoid issues with plagiarism.

Q 14 You are commenting that comparison points get a PI mark. What if they are comparing a trend about 1 thing? e.g. The temperature at the bottom of the hill was 14oC compared to the top of the hill where it was only 9oC, this is a big difference of 5oC.

A 14 We'd be looking for a little more here - is 5°C a big difference in this context? This would need some context; is it bigger than expected, lower than expected? A qualitative statement or trend well expressed and backed up with data likely to be awarded a mark.

Q 15 For the PI mark in Graph E paragraph, the candidate uses "2" and "6" which are numbers on the graph. Is this not a straight lift? Or is the mark awarded for the comparison

A 15 A candidate cannot use a graph with no numbers on it; the candidate has correctly read the graph however. They have made a comparison and given data to back up a statement.

Q 16 Could that arguably be analysis? As it adds to their point, about the no. of visitors etc...

A 16 This question refers to the fact that the candidate introduces new information in the conclusion. A new piece of information should not be introduced in a conclusion. However marks can be awarded wherever a candidate makes a relevant point and this would have been awarded an analytical mark if it had been a little more developed.

Q 17 Can marks be gained in conclusion for anything you would do differently if you did it next time?

A 17 Yes – marks are available in the ‘gathering techniques’ section for evaluation of fieldwork or research techniques. Candidates will be awarded these marks wherever in the study they make their point.

Q 18 Are developed points are required for marks in the assignment too?

A 18 Yes, the standard for the assignment is the same as the question paper.

Q 19 Q3 of 2016 exam paper (rural land degradation) - candidates studying a semi-arid area could gain a mark by lifting straight from the diagram, but no example was given for those who studied the rainforest?

A 19 It has always been the case that some graphics may refer to one of a choice of case studies. There is no way around this unless there are no graphics in the question paper. In this instance the candidate would not have gained a mark by lifting; the command was to ‘explain’ and no explanation was given on the diagram.

Q 20 Can you clarify the ‘limited points’ marks? Do they have to be linked?

A 20 Where a candidate makes two limited points they can be put together to make one developed mark. Ideally these points should be linked however where candidates make a series of limited points these can be put together. Candidates should be careful however that they are still responding to the demands of the question - it can be difficult to make lots of limited explanatory points - they still need to explain to gain full marks.