

# CAIE Geography Pre-U

4: Research Topic  
Exam Structure and Tips



## The Exam

### Length and marks

Paper 4 is **1 hour and 30 minutes** in length and is worth **50 marks**.

### Question structure

For Paper 4 you need to answer **3 questions**.

- The first question contains a **2 marker, 4 marker, 6 marker and an 8 marker**. All of these are based on **sources**. The first two are simple state and describe questions.
  - In the 6 marker, you generally have to use the source to answer 'a to what extent' or '**assess**' question about the data.
  - The 8 marker is then usually a question about the usefulness or **value** of the source.
  - The next question is composed of a **5 marker and a 10 marker**. The first part again uses another **source**. The second part is where you use the information and knowledge from your **wider study** of your chosen topic.
  - The last question is where you get a choice between two questions and is the question where you use your **research project**. It is a **15 marker** and could ask you about how you developed your hypothesis, your data collection methods, your presentation methods or your analyses and explanation of the data you collected.

### General mark schemes

For the 6 marker, in order to achieve the top level, you need to:

- Supported **judgement**.
- **Similarities are weighed against the differences**.
- Accurate **data** support.

For the 8 marker, in order to achieve the top level, you need to:

- A clear understanding of the **strengths and limitations** of the resources
- **Evaluation**.
- **Knowledge** of other resources/information which would be of use.
- Mature **assessment**.

For the 5 marker, in order to achieve the top level, you need to:

- Clear and detailed **discussion**.
- **Assessment**.
- **Data** used to support points.

For the 10 marker, in order to achieve the top level, you need to:

- A clear **focus** on the question with appropriate exemplar support.
- There is a sophisticated **understanding**.
- The evaluation is well **supported** by exemplar material.

For the 15 marker, in order to achieve the top level, you need to:

- Show detailed and accurate **knowledge** and clear, high order **understanding** of the content of the subject.



- Use **relevant and accurate examples** from own investigation which are used effectively.
- **Organise clearly**, use **good English** and use accurate **geographical terminology**.
- Be fully focused on the **specific demands of the question**.
- **Analyse** thoroughly and show a critical approach to **evaluation** and give appropriate application of **concepts and theories**.
- Write a conclusion which is **logical** and **well founded on the evidence and argument** that you have given.

## Revision

If you are stuck on how to revise, here is a suggestion about how to go about it. First read through the **detailed notes and case studies**, making sure that you understand everything. Watching **videos**, especially for formations or processes might be useful. Then keep going over the **flashcards**, learning statistics, definitions and points. Doing this over a long period of time is best rather than cramming it in close to your test or exam.

Doing some **extra reading** is also useful. It can help to give you a wider understanding of the topic that isn't covered in the detailed notes as well as giving more specific examples that you might find easier to remember and include in answering questions. There are plenty of these linked in each topic.

Make sure to also **practise doing questions** and ask your teacher to mark them. Make sure you get feedback and understand where you went wrong and where you can improve. You can also go and rewrite or re-draft your answer, improving on where you went wrong. As this is a relatively new specification, there are not that many questions. If you run out you can write your own questions using the previous questions as bases.

