Mark Scheme (Results)

January 2025

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Level
In Geography (WGE03) Paper 01
Contested Planet

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General Marking Guidance

- All candidates must receive the same treatment. Examiners must mark the first candidate in exactly the same way as they mark the last.
- Mark schemes should be applied positively. Candidates must be rewarded for what they have shown they can do rather than penalised for omissions.
- Examiners should mark according to the mark scheme not according to their perception of where the grade boundaries may lie.
- There is no ceiling on achievement. All marks on the mark scheme should be used appropriately.
- All the marks on the mark scheme are designed to be awarded. Examiners should always award full marks if deserved, i.e. if the answer matches the mark scheme. Examiners should also be prepared to award zero marks if the candidate's response is not worthy of credit according to the mark scheme.
- Where some judgement is required, mark schemes will provide the principles by which marks will be awarded and exemplification may be limited.
- When examiners are in doubt regarding the application of the mark scheme to a candidate's response, the team leader must be consulted.
- Crossed out work should be marked UNLESS the candidate has replaced it with an alternative response.

Question Number	Using Figure 1, explain how this model could help manage the risks of drought successfully.	Mark
1 (a)	**AO1 (4 marks)/AO2 (6 marks)** **Marking instructions** Markers must apply the descriptors in line with the general marking guidance and the qualities outlined in the levels-based mark scheme below. **Indicative content guidance** The indicative content below is not prescriptive and candidates are not required to include all of it. Other relevant material not suggested below must also be credited. Relevant points may include: AO1: • Drought is an extended period of below average precipitation, leading to falling water availability. • Drought can be short term, but longer-term droughts bring higher risks. • Locations with seasonal rains are at greater risk of drought; risk may be rising due to climate change / global warming. • Some groups such as farmers and people relying on unimproved water supplies are more vulnerable to drought. • Management involves short- and long-term strategies to cope with consequences and causes. AO2: • Figure 1 suggest 3 'steps' are needed, suggesting drought is a complex hazard with multiple causes so requires a range of solutions / management strategies, rather than just one. • Because drought develops over time monitoring (1) soil moisture and precipitation over time can give early warnings – and therefore time to prepare; early warning systems can flag up regions with developing problems (FEWSNET, US Drought Monitor). • Monitoring, forecasting and warning may not be available in developing regions due to costs / dissemination difficulties. • Vulnerability assessment (2) could help identify at risk groups i.e. communities with rising water stress, those already relying on dirty and insecure supplies or spending a large part of income of water (economic water security); this could allow aid /adaptation strategies and help to be targeted at those most in need. • There are many ways of mitigating drought (3) through aid, but longer-term strategies such as adaptive farming and	**(10)**

	improving water supplies may be seen as better; some are costly and not available in all places. • Figure 1 could be related to broader concepts such as the hazard management cycle; explanations could focus on the need for long-term planning and preparation as much as immediate response. • Early action and preparation i.e. Steps 1 and 2, may reduce the need for expensive 'emergency' measures when drought strikes. NB Accept other reasonable explanations linked to the Figure.	

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–4	• Demonstrates isolated or generic elements of geographical knowledge and understanding, some of which may be inaccurate or irrelevant. (AO1) • Applies knowledge and understanding to geographical information inconsistently. Connections/relationships between stimulus material and the question may be irrelevant. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to produce an interpretation with limited relevance and/or support. (AO2)
Level 2	5-7	• Demonstrates geographical knowledge and understanding, which is mostly relevant and may include some inaccuracies. (AO1) • Applies knowledge and understanding to geographical information to find some relevant connections/relationships between stimulus material and the question. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to produce a partial but coherent interpretation that is mostly relevant and supported by evidence. (AO2)
Level 3	8-10	• Demonstrates accurate and relevant geographical knowledge and understanding throughout. (AO1) • Applies knowledge and understanding to geographical information logically to find fully relevant connections/relationships between stimulus material and the question. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to produce a full and coherent interpretation that is relevant and supported by evidence. (AO2)

Question Number	Assess the impacts of high and low pressure weather hazards on mid-latitude locations.	Mark
1 (b)	**AO1 (5 marks)/AO2 (10 marks)** **Marking instructions** Markers must apply the descriptors in line with the general marking guidance and the qualities outlined in the levels-based mark scheme below. **Indicative content guidance** The indicative content below is not prescriptive and candidates are not required to include all of it. Other relevant material not suggested below must also be credited. Relevant points may include: AO1 • In mid-latitude locations low pressure hazards are depressions (storms) and their associated fronts (NB *not* tropical cyclones). • These bring strong, possibly gale force winds and heavy precipitation (including snow in winter) • High-pressure anticyclones / blocking anticyclones are often associated with low rainfall and high temperatures (or very low winter temperatures); drought is a risk. • Both high- and low-pressure mid-latitude weather are strongly influenced by the movement of air masses and the polar front jet stream. • Impacts can be in the form of economic losses (property, infrastructure, insurance claims), injury and death (social) and the costs associated with management. AO2 • Mid-latitude depressions might be viewed as potentially very severe (Storm Arwen, 1987 Great Storm, 1953 North Sea flood) but they are very short-term lasting for 24-48 hours in most cases. • Strong winds cause widespread property damage and can cause loss of life; often flooding is widespread which can lead to very high insured losses and long-term damage to bridges, farmland and coasts. • Severe winter storms cause heavy snow fall (northern Europe, USA north-east) leading to widespread power cuts, transport disruption – with particular impacts on farming and isolated communities.	**(15)**

	• High-pressure weather systems in winter (Pc/A air) can bring extended periods of dangerously cold weather with impacts on farmers and the elderly. • Winter and summer high pressure often lead to low air quality and pollution with impacts on human health. • Some might argue that summer high-pressure has more widespread impacts as blocking highs are associated with dangerously high temperatures (heatwave) and wildfires and these conditions can persist for weeks: European heatwaves in 2003, 2022 and 2023, Canadian heatwaves and wildfires in 2022 and 2023; more deaths are associated with these high-pressure events. • Extended periods of high pressure can lead to drought and water shortages. • Credit the idea that in mid-latitudes global warming may be making high-pressure heatwaves more common and this has major implications for farming but also impacts on human health among vulnerable groups. **NB:** weather hazards must be mid-latitude in nature, not tropical cyclones (other than examples like Sandy in 2012 which affected areas unusually far from the tropic) or drought in the tropics. Accept other reasonable explanations. A focus on the ITCZ, tropical cyclones, equatorial and tropical areas will be self-penalising.	

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Level 1	1–4	• Demonstrates isolated elements of geographical knowledge and understanding, some of which may be inaccurate or irrelevant. (AO1) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas, making limited and rarely logical connections/relationships, to produce an interpretation with limited relevance and/or support. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to produce an unsupported or generic conclusion, drawn from an argument that is unbalanced or lacks coherence. (AO2)
Level 2	5-8	• Demonstrates geographical knowledge and understanding, which is occasionally relevant and may include some inaccuracies. (AO1) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas with limited but logical connections/relationships to produce a partial

		interpretation that is supported by some evidence but has limited coherence. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to come to a conclusion, partially supported by an unbalanced argument with limited coherence. (AO2)
Level 3	9-12	• Demonstrates geographical knowledge and understanding, which is mostly relevant and may include some inaccuracies. (AO1) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas logically, making some relevant connections/relationships. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to produce a partial but coherent interpretation that is mostly relevant and supported by evidence. (AO2)
Level 4	13-15	• Demonstrates accurate and relevant geographical knowledge and understanding throughout. (AO1) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas logically, making relevant connections/relationships. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to produce a full and coherent interpretation that is relevant and supported by evidence. (AO2)

Question Number	Using Figure 2, suggest reasons for the differences in the scale of threats to biodiversity between these global regions.	Mark
2	**AO1 (4 marks) /AO2 (6 marks)** **Marking instructions** Markers must apply the descriptors in line with the general marking guidance and the qualities outlined in the levels-based mark scheme below. **Indicative content guidance** The indicative content below is not prescriptive and candidates are not required to include all of it. Other relevant material not suggested below must also be credited. Relevant points may include: AO1: • The three global regions on Figure 2 are at different development levels (developing Africa, emerging LAC and developed Europe).	**(10)**

	• Threats to biodiversity differ, although not in all cases (alien species) in terms of relative size. • Landuse change (deforestation, urbanisation, industrial development) is the largest in all cases. • Species over-exploitation (hunting, fishing, wildlife trade) and global warming show more variation. • Pollution is a much larger threat in Europe (could be water, land or air pollution). AO2: • 36% of the threat to biodiversity in Africa is caused by species over-exploitation which could include hunting, bushmeat and the illegal wildlife trade, perhaps driven by a lack of regulation and poverty; in LAC / Europe such activity is less economically necessary and policing is better. • Management policies and conservation areas might be more widespread (or better funded) in Europe so the direct threat to species in lower. • Development level seems to be linked to landuse change as a threat i.e. higher development leads to a greater threat, related to more advanced urbanisation and industrial development – so 58% of the threat in Europe. It is high in all 3 regions because of widespread population growth / density, urbanisation and economic development pressure. • The similarity of alien invasive species threat sizes might be explained by the fact that such species are widespread due to globalisation / trade, and take advantage in all locations equally. • The island nature of large parts of LAC could be used to explain why the GW threat is much higher there i.e. islands are vulnerable to sea level rise - or perhaps the destructive impact of more frequent tropical cyclones and / or coral bleaching events. • The pollution threat is highest in Europe (8%) compared to other regions and this can be related to the intensive energy use and water pollution in developed regions i.e. the most industrial countries. NB accept other reasonable explanations. Do not expect all parts of Figure 2 to be explained.	

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	0	No rewardable material.
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		between stimulus material and the question may be irrelevant. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to produce an interpretation with limited relevance and/or support. (AO2)
Level 2	5-7	• Demonstrates geographical knowledge and understanding, which is mostly relevant and may include some inaccuracies. (AO1) • Applies knowledge and understanding to geographical information to find some relevant connections/relationships between stimulus material and the question. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to produce a partial but coherent interpretation that is mostly relevant and supported by evidence. (AO2)
Level 3	8-10	• Demonstrates accurate and relevant geographical knowledge and understanding throughout. (AO1) • Applies knowledge and understanding to geographical information logically to find fully relevant connections/relationships between stimulus material and the question. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to produce a full and coherent interpretation that is relevant and supported by evidence. (AO2)

Question number	To what extent are rapidly growing cities at the greatest risk from extreme weather hazards?	Mark
3	**AO1 (5 marks)/AO2 (10 marks)** **Marking instructions** Markers must apply the descriptors in line with the general marking guidance and the qualities outlined in the levels-based mark scheme below. **Indicative content guidance** The indicative content below is not prescriptive and candidates are not required to include all of it. Other relevant material not suggested below must also be credited. Relevant points may include: AO1: • Urbanisation is happening most rapidly in developing and emerging countries, especially in coastal cities (Asian megadeltas).	**(15)**

	• Urbanisation dramatically changes population density and the nature of the land surface and how it responds to weather events. • Weather hazards include storms, tropical cyclones, flooding, drought and wildfires (NB tectonic hazards are *not* relevant) • Risk is a function of the magnitude of a hazard event, vulnerability, and capacity to cope (hazard risk equation) • Risk can be managed and reduced using a range of methods. AO2: • Rapid urbanisation implies cities / towns expanding by 2-3% per year, which often means poorly built, informal housing at very high density; this is especially vulnerable to tropical cyclone damage and associated flooding and landslides. • Many of the people living in rapidly growing cities are young i.e. rural-urban migration and their children which increases vulnerability further. • Some might argue that risk is less about the nature of urbanisation and more about physical location i.e. on cyclone tracks and / or places that experience annual monsoons; also to blame could be increased impermeable surfaces and poorly planned flood management; the urban heat island effect could increase risk from heat waves; perhaps a combination of risk factors in important. • Areas experiencing rapid urbanisation can also be areas of poverty, so people lack capacity to cope when weather hazards strike. • Management and response will be more difficult in areas with low incomes and high-density housing which has not been planned; countries experiencing these conditions may lack funds for effective management. • On the other hand, severe weather hazards can have major impacts on areas that are already highly urbanised (US and Japanese coastal cities) and rural areas that depend on farming – rapid urbanisation is not necessary to yield very high human and economic losses. • Some might argue that in most cases poverty explains most losses from extreme weather, regardless of level of ongoing urbanisation; many of the worst droughts affect rural areas the most (answers could consider that different weather hazards affect some geographical locations more than others). **NB** for Level 4 marks the issue of 'rapidly growing' should be specifically addressed in answers. Accept other reasonable explanations.	

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Level 1	1–4	• Demonstrates isolated elements of geographical knowledge and understanding, some of which may be inaccurate or irrelevant. (AO1) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas, making limited and rarely logical connections/relationships, to produce an interpretation with limited relevance and/or support. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to produce an unsupported or generic conclusion, drawn from an argument that is unbalanced or lacks coherence. (AO2)
Level 2	5-8	• Demonstrates geographical knowledge and understanding, which is occasionally relevant and may include some inaccuracies. (AO1) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas with limited but logical connections/relationships to produce a partial interpretation that is supported by some evidence but has limited coherence. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to come to a conclusion, partially supported by an unbalanced argument with limited coherence. (AO2)
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Level 4	13-15	• Demonstrates accurate and relevant geographical knowledge and understanding throughout. (AO1) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas logically, making relevant connections/relationships. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to produce a full and coherent interpretation that is relevant and supported by evidence. (AO2)

Question Number	Using Figure 3, suggest reasons why energy security risk is higher in some countries than others.	Mark
4(a)	**AO1 (2 marks)/AO2 (3 marks)** Award **1** mark (AO1) for each relevant point and further expansion marks for reasons/explanations ***linked to the data shown (AO2)***, up to a maximum of 5 marks. • Some countries (Canada, Russia – low risk) have very large domestic fossil fuel reserves (1) so they do not rely on expensive imports / trade routes (1). • Large land areas in relation to small population ('low risk' Canada / Russia) (1) mean high potential to develop different types of resources (HEP, wind, biofuels) to offset insecurity (1). • Policy decisions to increase security might reduce risk (1) e.g. nuclear power in France (medium) or biofuels in Brazil (medium) (1). • High risk countries could be energy poor both in terms of domestic fossil fuels and renewable potential (1) simply due to physical factors / reliance on imports (SK, Belgium) which limits their development of a secure energy mix (1) NB Accept other reasonable explanations linked to the Figure.	**(5)**

Question Number	Using named examples, assess the view that extraction and use of unconventional fossil fuels has more costs than benefits.	Mark
4(b)	**AO1 (5 marks)/AO2 (10 marks)** **Marking instructions** Markers must apply the descriptors in line with the general marking guidance and the qualities outlined in the levels-based mark scheme below. **Indicative content guidance** The indicative content below is not prescriptive and candidates are not required to include all of it. Other relevant material not	

	suggested below must also be credited. Relevant points may include: AO1: • Fossil fuels are energy sources consisting of ancient stored carbon, which is released as CO2 when combusted – along with useable heat energy. • Unconventional fossil fuels include tar sands (Athabasca, Canada), shale oil and gas (USA) and deepwater oil and gas (North Sea, Brazil). • These sources are technically harder to extract and often more expensive than conventional oil and gas. • Unconventional fossil fuels make up part of the energy mix of some countries alongside conventional fossil fuel, renewables, biofuels and nuclear. • Costs and benefits can be categorised as environmental, economic, social and even political / geopolitical – as well as in terms of overall energy security. AO2: • Unconventional fossil fuel use can increase energy security as they are 'domestic' sources for the USA and Canada, thereby reducing reliance on imports (and risky pathways) but also increasing exports (Canadian tar sand oil to the USA, USA fracked gas to EU) and therefore a positive trade balance. • Locally benefits include a large boost to employment in places such as Athabasca, the Dakotas and Pennsylvania – these locations have 'booming' economies in locations that were one depressed and marginal. • There are potentially large reserves of unconventional fossil fuels so energy secure could be secured for decades in some cases; a strong reason to develop these resources especially with energy market turmoil (Ukraine / Russia conflict, ongoing Middle East tensions). • These fossil fuels allow 'business as usual' policies to continue i.e. economies run on gas and oil can delay the day they need to switch to renewables / alternatives. • However, there are high costs of extraction in terms of tar sands oil, so an oil price of $60+ may be needed for schemes to be economically viable. • Many might argue that the most serious costs and environmental and social i.e. deforestation for tar sands, toxic waste ponds, polluted groundwater supplies (fracking) and in many cases suspected or proven negative health implications for local communities for	**(15)**

	environmental pollution; use of natural gas to extract tar sands; risks of deep water oil extraction. • Arguably worse, is the continued emissions of carbon caused by their use, contributing to GW which are generally higher than for equivalent conventional fossil fuels e.g. natural gas used to process tar sands – these emissions contribute to GW and delay the switch to renewables which are increasingly available and economically competitive. • Some might argue unconventional fossil fuels might be justified in terms of local, short-term economic benefits but that these are outweighed by long-term, global, environmental costs. NB Level 4 should include both extraction and use. Accept other reasonable explanations. Max L2 = 5 if 'fossil fuels' with no 'unconventional' content.	

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	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–4	• Demonstrates isolated elements of geographical knowledge and understanding, some of which may be inaccurate or irrelevant. (AO1) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas, making limited and rarely logical connections/relationships, to produce an interpretation with limited relevance and/or support. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to produce an unsupported or generic conclusion, drawn from an argument that is unbalanced or lacks coherence. (AO2)
Level 2	5-8	• Demonstrates geographical knowledge and understanding, which is occasionally relevant and may include some inaccuracies. (AO1) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas with limited but logical connections/relationships to produce a partial interpretation that is supported by some evidence but has limited coherence. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to come to a conclusion, partially supported by an unbalanced argument with limited coherence. (AO2)
Level 3	9-12	• Demonstrates geographical knowledge and understanding, which is mostly relevant and may include some inaccuracies. (AO1)

		• Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas logically, making some relevant connections/relationships. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to produce a partial but coherent interpretation that is mostly relevant and supported by evidence. (AO2)
Level 4	13-15	• Demonstrates accurate and relevant geographical knowledge and understanding throughout. (AO1) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas logically, making relevant connections/relationships. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to produce a full and coherent interpretation that is relevant and supported by evidence. (AO2)

Question Number	Using Figure 4, suggest reasons why water stress risk is higher in some countries than others.	Mark
5(a)	**AO1 (2 marks)/AO2 (3 marks)** Award **1** mark (AO1) for each relevant point and further expansion marks for reasons/explanations ***linked to the data shown (AO2),*** up to a maximum of 5 marks. • Latitude is a factor with some countries having highly seasonal / very little rainfall (India, Egypt: extremely high) (1) meaning water stress is more likely due to supply / demand imbalances annually or seasonally (1). • The 'low' risk category are large countries with low population densities (Canada, Brazil) (1) so water supplies are unlikely to be under pressure due to low demand but large supply (1). • Medium and low risk are generally OECD / highly developed (1) therefore having the money to finance complex and sustainable water supply systems (China) (1), but some (Australia) have physical challenges such as long-term drought /regions of shortage (Beijing)/ GW which increases their risk score (1). NB Accept other reasonable explanations linked to the Figure.	**(5)**

Question Number	Using named examples, assess the view that the use and exploitation of transboundary water resources always leads to conflict.	Mark
5(b)	**AO1 (5 marks)/AO2 (10 marks)** **Marking instructions**	

	Markers must apply the descriptors in line with the general marking guidance and the qualities outlined in the levels-based mark scheme below. **Indicative content guidance** The indicative content below is not prescriptive and candidates are not required to include all of it. Other relevant material not suggested below must also be credited. Relevant points may include: AO1: • Transboundary water sources straddle an international or internal border and include both rivers and aquifers. • There are about 400 international transboundary water sources worldwide; most are shared equitably and have sharing agreements in place. • A small number are a source of conflict; in some cases these are significant, long-term conflicts / disagreements between multiple players. • International rules / frameworks exist to help resolve transboundary water disputes (Berlin, Helsinki) AO2: • Most transboundary waters are shared between parties without any problems or issues; there are over 450 sharing agreements in place according to the UN where multiple players gain the 'benefit' of water use with few if any issues / conflicts. • However, there are major high-profile examples where agreements have not been reached and / or there are strained relations over existing agreements (Colorado, Nile, Mekong, Ganges, Tigris / Euphrates): many of these rivers 'serve' millions of people so the issues can be high stakes. • Some disagreements occur within countries e.g. Ebro in Spain, or Northern v Southern California – these might be evaluated as easier to solve. • The negative consequences can be high if agreement is not reached i.e. heightened regional tensions / threats of military action (Egypt-Ethiopia over the Nile Agreement); reduced downstream supply if an upstream party acts unilaterally (China's dams on the Mekong) and these could have major implications for farming and domestic / industrial supply over the medium term. • In most cases where there is disagreement / conflict water is just one issue among many i.e. countries have poor relationships in general (India-Bangladesh) so water disputes are not the 'whole story.'	**(15)**

	• One argument would be that as water has no alternative, people and governments must use all water sources available in many cases – regardless of the consequences even if this risk escalating into wider conflict. • There are alternative ways of obtaining water (desalination, groundwater, conservation) but these are often high cost and require systems change which may be unrealistic for low-income countries / communities – but in some cases are possible e.g. Singapore's 'Four Taps' gradually reducing reliance on water imports from Malaysia. • It could be argued that reducing reliance on a shared water resource would increase water security / reduce risks over the long-term. • Some might argue that global warming could worsen existing conflict situations if the overall quantity of water that needs to be shared reduces or become more variable year on year. NB Accept other reasonable explanations.	

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	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–4	• Demonstrates isolated elements of geographical knowledge and understanding, some of which may be inaccurate or irrelevant. (AO1) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas, making limited and rarely logical connections/relationships, to produce an interpretation with limited relevance and/or support. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to produce an unsupported or generic conclusion, drawn from an argument that is unbalanced or lacks coherence. (AO2)
Level 2	5-8	• Demonstrates geographical knowledge and understanding, which is occasionally relevant and may include some inaccuracies. (AO1) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas with limited but logical connections/relationships to produce a partial interpretation that is supported by some evidence but has limited coherence. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to come to a conclusion, partially supported by an unbalanced argument with limited coherence. (AO2)

Level 3	9-12	• Demonstrates geographical knowledge and understanding, which is mostly relevant and may include some inaccuracies. (AO1) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas logically, making some relevant connections/relationships. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to produce a partial but coherent interpretation that is mostly relevant and supported by evidence. (AO2)
Level 4	13-15	• Demonstrates accurate and relevant geographical knowledge and understanding throughout. (AO1) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas logically, making relevant connections/relationships. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to produce a full and coherent interpretation that is relevant and supported by evidence. (AO2)

Question number	To what extent is the world becoming more multi-polar in terms of economic, military and geopolitical power?	Mark
6	**AO1 (5 marks)/AO2 (15 marks)** **Marking instructions** Markers must apply the descriptors in line with the general marking guidance and the qualities outlined in the levels-based mark scheme below. Responses that demonstrate **only** AO1 without any AO2 should be awarded marks as follows: • Level 1 AO1 performance: 1 mark • Level 2 AO1 performance: 2 marks • Level 3 AO1 performance: 3 marks • Level 4 AO1 performance: 4–5 marks **Indicative content guidance** The indicative content below is not prescriptive and candidates are not required to include all of it. Other relevant material not suggested below must also be credited. Relevant points may include: AO1: • Polarity refers to the balance of superpowers in terms of who / how many are geopolitically dominant. • A unipolar world (one superpower / hyperpower), a bipolar world (two broadly equal) or multi-polar (multiple, broadly equal).	**(20)**

	• Power can be measured in many ways including economic (GDP, TNCs), military resources and politically (global actions, reach, influence at IGOs) • Power has changed in the past e.g. the 1945-1990 Cold War bipolar era versus the British dominated 19th century unipolar world. AO2: There is no 'correct' answer; candidates should be credited based on the quality of their arguments and the support provided: • Some might argue that the world continues to be dominated by the USA as a 'hyperpower' so is unipolar and has been since the early 1990s: the USA military spend and global reach still exceeds that on other challengers, even China. USA TNCs are highly innovative, socially and economically disruptive (X, Tesla, Facebook) – but there is some evidence of Chinese 'catch up' in terms of Tik-Tok and EV manufacturers. • Despite China's obvious economic and military strengths it intervenes locally and aggressively (HK, South China Sea, Pakistan CPEC) but much less so globally – the G20, BRICs and ADB have moved China more towards a global role, but not yet an interventionist one. • Another argument might be that rather than being unipolar, the world is becoming bipolar i.e. the USA and China are roughly equal in terms of power: PPP GDP might suggest this is the case, plus China's military and technology; but there are arguments against this such as the USA's continued 'soft' cultural power in global brands and media which is not matched by China. • Multipolar arguments could centre around a USA + EU + BRICS theme; Russia and India have strengths – but some might argue too many weaknesses to be considered equal to the others; the BRICS concept dates from 2001 and many might argue that in 2025 it is less relevant as some BRICS that had potential have not really capitalised one this (Brazil, India). • Alliances and 'blocs' might be considered i.e. a NATO/ EU/ USMCA western bloc versus a China / SCA/ Russia / Turkey 'eastern' bloc (BRICS+ post-2024) – this type of argument might point away from the multipolar view towards a more bi-polar one with 2 leaders (USA and China). • The facets could be broken down e.g. arguing that China and the USA are roughly equal in economic terms, but not in military geopolitical / cultural terms; some discussion of future trends to 2030/2035 could also inform the discussion. **NB** Stronger answer should consider economic, military and geopolitical power (and perhaps others e.g. cultural), separately as part of a wider judgement. Accept other reasonable explanations.	

Level	Mark	Descriptor
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Level 1	1–5	• Demonstrates isolated elements of geographical knowledge and understanding, some of which may be inaccurate or irrelevant. (AO1) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical ideas, making limited and rarely logical connections/relationships. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to produce an interpretation with limited coherence and support from evidence. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to produce an unsupported or generic conclusion, drawn from an argument that is unbalanced or lacks coherence. (AO2)
Level 2	6-10	• Demonstrates geographical knowledge and understanding, which is occasionally relevant and may include some inaccuracies. (AO1) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas with limited but logical connections/relationships. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical ideas in order to produce a partial interpretation that is supported by some evidence but has limited coherence. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to come to a conclusion, partially supported by an unbalanced argument with limited coherence. (AO2)
Level 3	11-15	• Demonstrates geographical knowledge and understanding, which is mostly relevant and accurate. (AO1) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to find some logical and relevant connections/relationships. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical ideas in order to produce a partial but coherent interpretation that is supported by some evidence. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to come to a conclusion, largely supported by an argument that may be unbalanced or partially coherent. (AO2)
Level 4	16-20	• Demonstrates accurate and relevant geographical knowledge and understanding throughout. (AO1)

		• Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to find fully logical and relevant connections/relationships. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to produce a full and coherent interpretation that is supported by evidence. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to come to a rational, substantiated conclusion, fully supported by a balanced argument that is drawn together coherently. (AO2)

Question Number	To what extent has the global development gap become less significant due to rapid development progress in NICs and emerging economies?	Mark
7	**AO1 (5 marks)/AO2 (15 marks)** **Marking instructions** Markers must apply the descriptors in line with the general marking guidance and the qualities outlined in the levels-based mark scheme below. Responses that demonstrate **only** AO1 without any AO2 should be awarded marks as follows: • Level 1 AO1 performance: 1 mark • Level 2 AO1 performance: 2 marks • Level 3 AO1 performance: 3 marks • Level 4 AO1 performance: 4–5 marks **Indicative content guidance** The indicative content below is not prescriptive and candidates are not required to include all of it. Other relevant material not suggested below must also be credited. Relevant points may include: AO1: • The global development gap is the income and quality of life gap between rich and poor; measured using GDP PC / HDI and other metrics • The gap exists between countries, but also within countries in terms of income, gender, ethnicity and religion. • NICs (newly industrialised countries) / emerging countries have seen rapid economic and quality of life development in the last 40 years. • The development gap was once viewed in north / south terms, but might now be seen as more of a spectrum of development levels with the majority in the middle-income / emerging / MIC bracket. AO2 • NICS and emerging countries have made much development progress and poverty has fallen; early movers like Taiwan	**(20)**

	and SK now have OECD levels of wealth and have 'crossed the gap' fully; others like China, Vietnam, Indonesia, Kenya – have made significant progress and now have PC incomes in the $5000-$15000 range whereas 30 years ago it was a few $100. • In terms of absolute numbers, China accounts for a huge share of poverty reduction within Asia: looking at other countries (India, Pakistan) reveals a less rosy picture once the Chinese progress is accounted for. • On the other hand the developed / OECD countries have also become wealthier so the 'gap' to emerging countries is similar to what it was 30-40 years ago: but far fewer people live in poverty and hunger so while there is still a 'gap' it is less significant in terms of QoL. • Some might argue that at the up of the income spectrum there is a global elite / global 1% which arguably makes the gap to the remaining 99% even larger than ever (a view taken by Oxfam and left-leaning observers) • Not everywhere has benefitted; large parts of South Asia and SSA still have high poverty levels and lack of basic needs; it could be argued that poverty and lack of progress has become concentrated in a few regions which are proving 'stubborn' in terms of kick-starting development – this could be related to war / conflict, dependency (Dependency Theory), neo-colonialism and weak governance. • Global efforts (MDGs and SDGs) have had some success in terms of reducing absolute poverty, absolute hunger and in terms of improving access to primary education – so the number of people considered living in absolute poverty (under $2.15 per day) is now under 10% of world population; this could be used as evidence that being very poor and lacking basic needs is 'unusual' compared to 'normal' in the relatively recent past. Some technologies (mobile phones, internet) now have penetration levels of 40-50% even in many LDC countries. • The gap might be seen as being 'concentrated' in a small number of 'fragile states' with very little reasonable chance of making progress (CAR, Yemen, Afghanistan, Haiti) so while the number of very poor is smaller, their significance has not diminished. • Some might take the view that closing the gap has contributed to resource exploitation, pollution, deforestation and global warming – so perhaps the 'gains' are illusory and temporary due to the emergence of new environmental threats. NB Accept other reasonable explanations.	

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–5	• Demonstrates isolated elements of geographical knowledge and understanding, some of which may be inaccurate or irrelevant. (AO1) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical ideas, making limited and rarely logical connections/relationships. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to produce an interpretation with limited coherence and support from evidence. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to produce an unsupported or generic conclusion, drawn from an argument that is unbalanced or lacks coherence. (AO2)
Level 2	6-10	• Demonstrates geographical knowledge and understanding, which is occasionally relevant and may include some inaccuracies. (AO1) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas with limited but logical connections/relationships. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical ideas in order to produce a partial interpretation that is supported by some evidence but has limited coherence. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to come to a conclusion, partially supported by an unbalanced argument with limited coherence. (AO2)
Level 3	11-15	• Demonstrates geographical knowledge and understanding, which is mostly relevant and accurate. (AO1) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to find some logical and relevant connections/relationships. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical ideas in order to produce a partial but coherent interpretation that is supported by some evidence. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to come to a conclusion, largely supported by an argument that may be unbalanced or partially coherent. (AO2)
Level 4	16-20	• Demonstrates accurate and relevant geographical knowledge and understanding throughout. (AO1)

		• Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to find fully logical and relevant connections/relationships. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to produce a full and coherent interpretation that is supported by evidence. (AO2) • Applies knowledge and understanding of geographical information/ideas to come to a rational, substantiated conclusion, fully supported by a balanced argument that is drawn together coherently. (AO2)

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