

2023 ASSESSMENT REPORT

GGY315120 GEOGRAPHY

Section A

Question 1

Question 1 assessed Criterion 4.

In Part A, candidates were required to describe what happens to birth rates and death rates over the five stages of the demographic transition. Generally, candidates were able to describe the changes in Crude Birth Rates (CBR) and Crude Death Rates (CDR) over the five stages. Better responses used the data on the model and demonstrated their understanding of the Crude Birth and Death rates per 1000 population. These responses also described each stage separately, showing a greater depth of understanding of the model. Weaker responses did not address the differences in the CBR and CDR and did not refer to the data on the information sheet. These responses also referred to the model overall rather than addressing each stage separately.

In Part B, candidates were required to identify one country in either Stage 4 or 5 of the demographic transition model. Many candidates were able to correctly identify countries that fit into either of these stages. The most common countries were Germany, Australia and Japan. Other countries were acceptable; however candidates needed to ensure that the country selected was a More Developed Country (MDC). Several candidates referred to China in their response. China is not classed as an MDC and therefore not a good example to use in this question. For the chosen country, candidates needed to choose at least three (3) demographic indicators and enter these into a labelled table. Many candidates only referred to the 3 indicators suggested in the question (birth rates, death rates and/or natural increase), while this was acceptable for this question stronger responses utilised other data from the Data Sheet to support their choice of country. Other useful indicators included fertility rate, life expectancy and the dependant population over the age of 65. Stronger responses were able to explain how these indicators lead to population change in their chosen country. Weaker responses did not put the data into a table and merely listed the data in their response. These responses also lacked any explanation of the relevance of the data they had provided.

Question 2

Question 2 assessed Criterion 6.

This question required candidates to answer in three parts; a, b and c. Some candidates combined their responses to these parts, whilst others answered them sequentially. Firstly, candidates were required to describe two challenges facing rural and/or remote Australia. The majority of challenges discussed included a lack of services and an ageing demographic. The services most discussed included health and aged care services, or education services. Other discussions included employment challenges due to shifting industries, declining workforce and lack of skilled labour.

Some candidates did not provide a challenge facing rural and/or remote Australia, instead providing a discussion around urban or metropolitan area challenges. These responses were not able to adequately address the complete question.

Stronger responses discussed these challenges in relation to a range of push and pull factors and set the challenge in the remote and/or rural Australian context before advancing to the next part of the question. Explaining how the challenge has, or had, developed in remote and/or rural Australia before then identifying a specific example of a rural or remote region or town was a good way to provide context before adding detail.

The second part of the question required candidates to identify a solution or program that is being implemented to address one of the challenges they previously identified.

Stronger responses identified and named a specific program or solution currently being implemented in their chosen region or town.

Weaker responses did not identify a specific solution or program, instead dealt with generalisations or proposed a solution without giving examples of where, when, or if the solution or program was effective. This made it difficult to then complete the final part of the question to assess the likely outcomes of the action over time, as there was no data or example to refer to.

The third part of the question required candidates to assess the likely outcomes of the action over time.

Stronger responses evaluated the likely outcome of the solution or program by relating the solution to the context of their challenge in terms of sustainability and different temporal scales. Some stronger responses also put the solution in a national and local context, providing evaluation of effectiveness in a spatial context.

Section B

Candidates were provided with 45 minutes to complete both questions from this section. This section was assessed against criteria 4 and 5.

Question 3

For this question, candidates were required to explain the causes of anthropogenic climate change before then describing some of the ways that climate change is having an impact on people and their environment. Candidates were required to refer to one example from an MDC and one example from a Less Developed Country (LDC) in their response.

Stronger responses provided a definition or explanation of anthropogenic climate change (ACC) and a clear connection between industrialisation, the drivers of ACC and explanation of the processes that lead to the change in climate patterns and global temperatures.

Some of the causes discussed included the removal of carbon sinks (e.g., wetlands, vegetation, soils) and the creation of carbon sources (e.g., burning of fossil fuels for energy generation, transport and manufacturing; agriculture releasing methane, creation of synthetic fertilisers, and waste emissions).

Some responses included a description of the contribution of processes such as the Enhanced Greenhouse Effect, the greenhouse gases that contribute to this process, and albedo, radiative forcing, and the ways in

which human activities are causing these changes in the climate or influencing feedback loops and tipping points.

Some of the ways climate change is having an impact on people and their environment discussed were: the increase of extreme weather events such as drought, flooding, bushfires, reduced snow cover or snowfall, impacts on the cryosphere such as melting permafrost, coral reef loss and degradation, melting of glaciers, desertification in dryland ecosystems, and loss of food security.

Some weaker responses discussed the direct impacts of greenhouse gas emitting actions such as air pollution on health of people living in close proximity to factories; however, this missed the focus of the question and section of the course on 'indirect impacts on land cover change'.

Some MDC examples included: Australia, Italy, Netherlands, and U.S.A. Some LDC examples included: South Sudan, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, China, Ethiopia, Maldives, India, Bangladesh, and Indonesia.

Some weaker responses confounded the ozone with the entire atmosphere and incorrectly surmised that greenhouse gases (GHG) were contributing to the ozone layer as a cause of ACC.

Question 4

For this question, candidates were required to describe the nature and consequence (social and environmental) of one form of human activity on land cover change, referencing a specific country (either MDC or LDC). The options for human activity on land cover change for this question include:

- deforestation
- the expansion and intensification of agriculture
- rangeland modification
- land and soil degradation
- irrigation
- land drainage
- land reclamation
- urban expansion
- mining.

Responses to this question were limited in their connection of the chosen direct action on land cover change to the social and environmental consequences. Responses to question 3 tended to be longer and more detailed. It is important that candidates allocate their time effectively as the questions for this section are weighted equally.

Some responses included discussions linking back to ACC and essentially extending their response to question 3, meaning they were not responding to question 4 adequately as ACC relates to indirect land cover change and question 4 relates to direct land cover change.

Of the land cover change topics, the vast majority of responses chose deforestation followed by expansion and intensification of agriculture or urban sprawl (of which an environmental impact often discussed was deforestation). The other land cover change topics were all selected at least once.

Some of the specific country examples chosen included: Australia, Vietnam, South Sudan, Brazil, Indonesia, Chad, Norway, China, India, Bolivia, Costa Rica, and Madagascar, among others.

Some of the social consequences of deforestation discussed included: impacts on First Nations People, cultural practices, connection to place, aesthetic values and wellbeing, tourism and employment, increased exposure to diseases (zoonotic) and increased malaria due to pooling of water and increased mosquito distribution.

Some of the environmental consequences of deforestation included: disruption of carbon and water cycles, erosion, siltation of waterways, reduced evapotranspiration, increased flooding/runoff due to compacted and eroded soils, salination, loss of biodiversity, reduced genetic diversity of species, fragmented ecosystems, increased forest fires, and fishbone deforestation increasing edge effects.

Section C

This section assessed criteria 3 and 5.

Question 5

This question required candidates to explain how the advances in communication and transport have influenced the process of globalisation. Many candidates were able to state what the advances in both communication and transportation were but then did not explain how these had led to globalisation. Some common communication advances discussed were improvements in Internet, satellite communication and social media. Better responses then linked these with making global communications faster and more efficient, connections with global financial markets and the development and increase in global brands.

Improvements in transport should have also been discussed in this question. Some weaker responses failed to address this part of the question. Many candidates were able to identify improvements in airlines to make them faster and cheaper meaning more people can travel between countries. They could then link this travel between countries with the sharing of culture, ideas and knowledge. Airline travel was also linked with the faster transport of goods between countries as part of the globalisation process. Shipping and the improvements in container ships were also excellent examples of how transport has led to globalisation. Stronger responses were able to discuss the growth in the efficiency of the shipping industry and the ability to transport mass amount of goods around the globe. Strong candidate responses were also able to discuss the impact of improvements in transport on the growth of global brands. A geographical definition of globalisation aided a candidate's response, showing a deeper level of understanding of the term and its importance on a global scale.

Question 6

This question required candidates to refer to two world cities and discuss their economic and cultural importance as centres for cultural innovation, transmission, and integration of ideas. The most common cities addressed were Tokyo, London, and New York. Better responses gave specific detail on each of the cities chosen rather than discussing generic characteristics of global cities. Identifying factors that classify a city as a world city greatly enhanced candidates' responses. These included: their role as centres for business and commercial activity; models of economic development; higher incomes; centres for banking; new technology, attract investment entrepreneurs; availability of capital and labour; efficient infrastructure; centres of economic and political institutions; highly developed telecommunications that connect and integrate with other cities; importance in increasing rate of world population moving into cities; cities as hubs for the flow of information and ideas and centres of innovation.

Stronger responses demonstrated the importance and influence of the city within its country/region. Responses needed to demonstrate how their chosen cities are contributing to the process of globalisation.

Question 7

Candidates need to discuss the recent shift in global economic power and cultural influence with reference to specific regions and/or countries. Most commonly responses centred around the growth of countries such as China and India as global economic powers.

Strong responses addressed the following: the relative economic decline but sustained cultural influence of the United States of America and Europe.; historical dominance of the USA as the world's largest economy; political/defence motivations for economic expansion; emerging economies such as Brazil; relevant factors such as foreign investment, expanding middle class, higher disposable incomes, youthful populations, trade etc.; slowdown in global economic growth; impact of superpower rivalry; USA – China trade wars.

Responses which referred to statistics added value to their response. Stronger candidates showed awareness of current global developments including the impact of Covid 19 on the economy, Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the increase of China's influences in the Asia Pacific region.

Section D

Questions in this section assessed criteria 3 and 6.

Question 8

39 candidates chose this question.

Overall, the standard of the essays for this question was good and it was clear many candidates had prepared well for this topic. Almost half of the candidates selected this question to answer from the choice of five available in this section. Conventional essay format and structure was consistent in most responses. The best responses included a clear and coherent introduction, clear delineation of ideas and themes into well-structured paragraphs, a logical flow of information and a well-reasoned conclusion. Candidates should be reminded that the use of headings and bullet points are not appropriate in this format. Once again, spelling was an issue in many essays. The most commonly mis-spelled words were 'pollution', 'vehicles', and 'accommodation'.

Many candidates were clearly prepared for this question and presented well-structured essays with relevant information to support their arguments. A large variety of megacities were chosen to explain the causes of urbanisation and discuss the challenges and possible solutions facing large urban areas in developing countries. Dhaka, Rio de Janeiro, Cairo, Lagos, and Mexico City were the most popular megacities discussed. Other megacities used as examples were Sao Paulo and Istanbul. Many candidates incorrectly referred to their megacities as LDCs, rather than referring to the countries these megacities are located in as LDCs.

The first part of the question asked candidates to explain the factors contributing to urbanisation for their chosen megacity. While a handful of candidates succinctly described specific push and pull factors relevant to their city, many candidates chose to ignore this part of the question entirely. The best responses highlighted social, environmental, and economic factors contributing to populations leaving rural areas for cities and did not ignore that a portion of the population growth is also occurring because of natural

increase within the existing urban population. Specific push factors discussed included, climate changes leading to repeated crop/livestock failures and food insecurity, a lack of essential services (such as healthcare and education), water shortages, desertification, conflict and unemployment. Pull factors discussed included increased employment opportunities, higher wages, and improved access to key infrastructure (e.g., water, electricity, housing) and services (healthcare, education). While a definition of urbanisation was not required, those that were able to adequately define the process of urbanisation as the 'increase in the proportion of people living in towns and cities' were rewarded. It was clear from the essays that many students misunderstood the concept of urbanisation, incorrectly defining it as 'rural to urban migration'. The term 'urban' was also misunderstood by some candidates, with various references to 'urban cities, 'cities with a highly urban population' or 'unurbanised' areas.

The second part of the question asked candidates to describe two challenges and evaluate two strategies. Major challenges facing these megacities ranged from rapidly expanding populations, inadequate housing, ad hoc development, lack of essential services, poor sanitation, disease and poor health services, water security, traffic congestion, public transport issues, air and water pollution, waste management, lack of educational and employment opportunities, climate change, crime and gender inequality.

Better answers were those that:

- Gave a clear (and accurate) definition of a megacity. Whilst not an explicit requirement according to the question, most took the initiative to provide a working definition.
- Clearly introduced their chosen megacity and explained why this city had grown.
- Selected two specific challenges and discussed these in considerable detail. Some of the weaker responses were quite broad in describing challenges and did not provide any specific details relevant to their chosen megacity.
- Described and evaluated specific management strategies already being implemented in terms of sustainability and used supporting evidence to assess the success or otherwise of these measures.
- Clearly assessed the effectiveness of the selected strategies, both in the short and long term and provided supporting evidence of efficacy. Better assessments carefully weighted the various costs and benefits of a strategy and used numerous pieces of supporting evidence to successfully argue why a strategy was effective or not.
- Used current, accurate, and appropriately communicated data. Many candidates did not use data effectively, such as when describing pollution. Representations such as 'Mexico City's pollution is measured at 168' are meaningless without context or units. When referring to 'current' scenarios, candidates should be encouraged to use data from within the last five to ten years (wherever possible).
- Used subject specific language and terminology and avoid terms such as 'mass amount' and 'extreme' especially when describing population growth, slums, urbanisation, urban sprawl, or air pollution.
- Used their gained knowledge and understanding to address each aspect of the exam question. It was clear that a number of candidates attempted to rewrite a rehearsed essay, or at least tried to fashion it to suit the question.

Question 9

21 candidates chose this question.

Overall, the standard of the essays was good. Candidates were required to explain how anthropogenic climate change is contributing to one form of land cover change (from the list provided). They were also asked to describe the social and economic impacts of that change and to discuss and evaluate local and/or international initiatives that have been implemented to address these impacts. A variety of issues were chosen to explain the impacts of anthropogenic climate change with coral reef loss/degradation, glacier and ice sheet retraction, and rising sea levels being the most popular topics. The best responses were clearly written, logically structured and contained numerous specific local, national and global examples and accurate, detailed data.

Conventional essay format and structure was consistent in most responses. The best responses included a clear and coherent introduction, clear delineation of ideas and themes into well-structured paragraphs, a logical flow of information and a well-reasoned conclusion. Candidates should be reminded that the use of headings and bullet points are not appropriate in this format. The best responses also directly addressed all components of the question and students were rewarded for incorporating specific geographic terminology throughout their work.

The first part of the question asked candidates to explain how anthropogenic climate change is having an impact on one form of land cover change. The best response clearly explained the direct and indirect contributions of anthropogenic climate change to their chosen land cover change (e.g. rising sea-surface temperatures leading to coral bleaching) and used specific geographical locations and data to support their assertions. However, some candidates, either incorrectly explained how climate change is contributing to changes or only provided a very superficial description of the connection between anthropogenic climate change and their chosen land cover change.

The second part of the question asked candidates to describe economic and social effects of their chosen land cover change, and describe and evaluate two local and/or international initiatives to manage these changes. Impacts of coral reef loss/degradation included: coral bleaching and ocean acidification leading to the disruption of the zone of habitation for coral, loss of biodiversity and impacts to fishing and tourism industries. Strategies to address these impacts included: policies aimed at the reduction of global greenhouse gas emissions (mitigation of anthropogenic threats), genetic modification of coral to withstand warmer and more acidic conditions, coral seeding programs, and the diversification of food and employment sources for local communities. Some examples of places impacted by coral reef loss and/or degradation included: Australia (The Great Barrier Reef), Fiji and the Philippines.

Impacts of glacier and ice sheet retraction included: rising sea levels, glacier outburst floods (GLOFs), reduction in water availability for communities and agriculture. Strategies to address these impacts included: policies aimed at the reduction of global greenhouse gas emissions (mitigation of anthropogenic threats) and GLOF warning systems. Some examples of places impacted by glacier and ice sheet retraction included: Greenland (as a territory of Denmark), Nepal, Antarctica, and Canada.

Impacts of rising sea levels included: loss of arable land due to flooding and salinisation, displacement of entire communities and countries (climate refugees); greater impact from storm surges and high tides; and loss of coastal infrastructure, including port and tourism facilities. Strategies for this included: the use of physical barriers to prevent storm surges such as flood gates; relocation to unaffected regions; reduction of greenhouse gas emissions through international agreements such as the Paris Agreement; and renewable

energy targets to replace burning of fossil fuels. Some of the examples of places impacted by rising sea levels included: Bangladesh, Tuvalu, and New York (USA). Students were asked to discuss local and/or international initiatives that have been implemented to address the impacts described in their response (not proposed initiatives). The best responses referred to specific strategies for both mitigating the impacts and adapting to them and carefully evaluated these initiatives from social, environmental and economic perspectives.

Question 10

This question was attempted by 8 candidates. The majority of these chose deforestation.

The question required candidates to describe the nature and extent of their chosen land cover change topic before explaining an existing program designed to address the land cover rehabilitation and assess the effectiveness of that program.

Weaker responses did not provide specific examples of a program or did not explain the detail of the program in terms of its effectiveness.

The majority of responses were limited in their depth given the time allocation for this question and were not able to adequately address the question given their limited discussion or lack of essay structure.

One general comment is that students should use the metric system in their responses (e.g., cm, mm) rather than inches or feet for accuracy and consistency.

Question 11

This question was only attempted by a small number of candidates.

The question required candidates to refer to one of the commodities, goods or services they had completed their globalisation depth study on. Stronger responses showed a great level of detail as to how the commodity, good or service had changed over time and its likely pattern for the future. Reference to specific countries and regions was essential and greatly enhanced these responses.

Weaker responses provide limited detail and did not show an in-depth level of the topic they had studied. There were also some responses that weren't in essay format, which affected criterion 3.

Question 12

This question was only answered by a small number of candidates. The question required candidates to choose one cultural element they had completed their globalisation depth study on. It was essential they referred to specific examples and discussed the implication of the pattern of its geographical spread. There were some unique cultural elements discussed and made for interesting reading. The most common elements referred to in this question related to fashion and components of this. In particular, fast fashion and the implications of this on LDCs and the overconsumption in MDCs.

Stronger responses were able to give specific examples of countries/locations and link the practices to standards of living in LDCs. These responses also referred to global brands and their role in the growth of fast fashion and the countries in which they operate.