



Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2024

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE

In Pakistan Studies (4PA1) Paper 02

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General comments

Candidates demonstrated secure, accurate knowledge and understanding many of the topics examined in Paper 2.

As in past examination series, sections A, B and C each consisted of a question (Questions 1,2 and 3) which included short and multiple-choice questions and longer answer questions. The resource-based sections Q1(d), Q2(d) and Q3(c) tended to result in generic answers rather than those referring to the photographs, which are supplied to assist the candidates. Candidates who did refer to the resources tended to be awarded higher marks.

It was very noticeable that Questions 2 and 3 were awarded higher marks than Section A: The Physical Environment. A large percentage of candidates had an excellent knowledge and understanding of:

- 1.4 c) Environmental impacts resulting from the exploitation of one renewable and one non-renewable energy resource.
- 2.3 b) The benefits and challenges of TNCs for the people and government of Pakistan.
- 3.4 Local actions and government strategies (in the context of international strategies) to mitigate and adapt to the challenges of climate change.

However, a significant proportion of candidates were very unsecure when answering questions based on these specification topics:

- 1.1 b) The nature and causes of seasonal variations in precipitation and temperature, including the characteristics and causes of the Southwest Monsoon and Western Disturbances
- and
- 3.1 c) The trends in fertility rates, infant/maternal mortality rates, and life expectancy and their implications for service provision such as education, healthcare and employment.

Question 1. The Physical Environment

1a(i) and 1a(ii)

Nearly all candidates answered both questions correctly. 'Glacial melting' was the most frequent response to 1a(ii).

1(b)

This question produced a range of answers. Many candidates mentioned the delta shape or mangroves in their answers. However, a significant number had little or no knowledge of the Indus deltaic coastline.

1(c)

When answering questions that require **one** cause, candidates should avoid introducing a second factor as this will not gain them any additional marks. This question produced a range of reasons for glacial ablation, the most frequent of which was global climate change. Most candidates were aware two or three marks for this section.

1(d)

Candidates generally showed good awareness of why Pakistan is suitable for wind energy. Many responses focused on the coastal breezes but also the vast areas of land available that did not require deforestation or disruption of human activities. Pleasingly, several candidates made specific references to the resource, however a few became confused and thought that the water in the photograph was linked to hydro electricity production.

1 (e)

Unfortunately, many candidates misread or did not have the knowledge to answer this question and wrote answers which explained the regional variation in precipitation, or spatial variations in temperature. This meant they could only be awarded very low marks or could not be credited at all. Candidates were required to focus on the seasonal variations in temperature and to clearly explain reasons for the variations which they described. When candidates did recognise the requirements of the question, responses were usually very good with developed ideas about latitude, continental affect, the influence of cloud cover.

1(f)

After the disappointing response to the previous question, it was pleasing to read many excellent answers to this question, which asked candidates to assess the environmental impacts resulting from the exploitation of one non-renewable energy resource in Pakistan. Many candidates selected coal, although some candidates wrote about gas exploitation from Toot field in Punjab or the Sui gas field in Balochistan. In general, candidates demonstrated better awareness of the environmental impacts of coal extraction both at the local and global scale with detailed explanations about land degradation, water pollution, but also CO₂ emissions more generally and how these link to climate change. Many candidates attempted some assessment, usually by explaining that the efforts made to reduce the environmental impact.

Question 2: The Human Environment

2a(i) and (ii)

Both these subsections tended to be correctly answered. The most frequent response to (ii) was trade deficit.

2(b)

Candidates were also secure when answering this question. Gender inequality, high imports, low-cost exports, reliance on agricultural production and imports of energy resources were given as significant factors.

2(c)

Many candidates were confident about Pakistan's rail system and the associated problems. The most common responses were related to the outdated nature of the rail network and the lack of investment; however, some candidates did not score full marks because they provided more than one challenge. In some cases, these challenges were linked so a logical development of ideas could be credited, but in others they were very separate challenges with no clear links made by the candidate e.g. lack of investment or the difficulty in building networks in some areas. It is important that candidates only develop one key idea, as required by the question.

2(d)

Compared to 1d, there were fewer candidates who referred to the resource. Answers tended to give generic reasons, although these were creditable, given the context. However, candidates who made use of the resource to note the nearby urban areas for labour supply, availability of flat land for factory construction or the transport system to reduce costs, were more likely to obtain full marks.

2(e)

There were some excellent responses to this question. Many candidates referred to named transnational corporations (TNCs). Most candidates included several reasons why TNCs are beneficial to Pakistan, the most common explanations focused on increased investment, increased employment and associated improvements with infrastructure. A number of candidates discussed how TNCs assisted after disasters which reduced the burden on the government.

2(f)

Candidates generally had very good knowledge and understanding of strategies used to increase agricultural production. There were detailed responses about the Green Revolution and land reform. Plant breeding programmes, education and water management were less commonly mentioned. Evaluative comments tended to come at the end of the responses, usually with based on the general idea that the strategies have been successful to some extent because they have increased production, but it is not enough to keep up with demand because of rapidly growing population.

Question 3: Challenges for Pakistan

3(a)(i) (ii) and (iii)

The sub-sections to 3(a) were attempted by all the candidates. Section (iii) proved problematic. The question asked was 'State two physical factors which influence the distribution of Pakistan's population'; however, a significant proportion wrote about human factors such as road and rail networks or large urban centres. Such answers could not be credited.

3(b)

The command word for this question was explain. The question asked candidates to explain one reason why increases in life expectancy have implications for health provision in Pakistan. Some candidates misinterpreted this question focusing instead on the causes of increased life expectancy rather than the implications of increased life expectancy. When the question was correctly understood there were usually relevant ideas about the increased need for doctors, which candidates frequently illustrated with current doctor to patient ratios and how this was already a challenge or the increased need for investment in health care. Some of the better candidates were able to provide the percentage of Gross Domestic Product spent on healthcare and again how increasing this would be a challenge.

3 (c)

A resource was supplied to assist candidates with their answers to this question. The resource showed information about a new housing development in Lahore. Candidates tended to use the resource for the opportunities focusing on accessibility and transport but gave more generic answers to the challenge section of this question. They might have used the information 'located at 25 km distance from city centre' to discuss the problems of traveling this distance to work, and the resulting pollution. Many candidates, however, showed sound knowledge and understanding of opportunities and challenges in cities in Pakistan and referred to specific cities, usually Karachi or Islamabad.

3(d)

This was an extremely well-known topic. The question allowed many candidates to show their knowledge and understanding of the n the actions being taken by the government of Pakistan to mitigate climate change. Even the answers that reached level one or two showed included generic facts, while that those reaching the top of level two or level three frequently discussed projects for planting trees, especially the 10 billion trees plan, and the National Adaptation plans.

3(e)

The final question on the paper required candidates to assess the challenges facing Pakistan's rural population. Candidates demonstrated clear understanding of the challenges facing rural communities. The most common developed ideas were access to education and healthcare. Overall, candidates were very good at addressing the assess part of this question by using initiative in place in the country to address these challenges. In terms of addressing the command word for these extended response questions, it was strongest question on the paper. The majority of candidates were able to access level two, and many reached level three.

