



Your Guide to
Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar in
Edexcel GCSE Geography A
(Geographical Foundations)

For assessment in 2013 only



Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG) GCSE Geography A

(Geographical Foundations)

Sample questions and mark schemes

Why has SPaG been introduced?

In 2011, the Department for Education announced that SPaG would be introduced into the assessment of four GCSE qualifications: English Literature, History, Geography and Religious Studies. In each of these qualifications 5% of the total marks must be allocated to the assessment of candidates' spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Therefore, for GCSE Geography A, with a total of 200 marks, 5% of the total is 10 marks for SPaG.

How has SPaG been applied?

In Edexcel's GCSE Geography A, SPaG marks will be assessed in Section B of Units 1, 2 and 3. SPaG is not assessed in Unit 4 (controlled assessment).

Paper/Unit	Section	Question	Raw Mark	Assessment	SPaG Mark
5GA01	B	On a 6 mark question	54	Exam	4
5GA02	B	On a 6 mark question	53	Exam	3
5GA03	B	On a 6 mark question	53	Exam	3
5GA04	N/A	N/A	50	Controlled Assessment	N/A
Total			210 raw marks		10 SPaG marks

Marks for Quality of Written Communication (QWC) remain unchanged throughout the GCSE Geography A qualification.

We have allocated SPaG marks across Units 1, 2 and 3 in order to give candidates an opportunity to be rewarded for their SPaG across different elements of the subject, rather than having all of the SPaG marks in just one unit examination. The SPaG marks have been allocated to the question within each section that offers the most

opportunity for the use of extensive technical vocabulary and gives candidates an opportunity to demonstrate their writing skills.

When is the first assessment of SPaG?

For GCSE Geography A, SPaG will first be assessed in January 2013. Exemplar questions and mark schemes are available in this guide and further materials will be added to the website www.edexcel.com/gcse2012geography over time.

How will SPaG be made clear on the exam paper?

There will be an instruction for candidates on the front cover of the exam paper as well as before any question that has SPaG marks available. Beneath the question we will indicate how many marks are available for SPaG for that question.

There are examples of how SPaG will be applied to the questions on pages 3–5 of this guide.



Sample exam question with SPaG assessment - Unit 1/Section B (Foundation Tier)

Spelling, punctuation and grammar will be assessed in *(b).

5 (a) Study Figure 5 in the Resource Booklet. It is a map showing the distribution of tropical rainforests in 2005.

Describe the distribution of tropical rainforests shown in Figure 5.

(2)

*(b) In many areas of the world tropical rainforests need to be managed.

Explain why cutting down tropical rainforests may lead to problems.

You should refer to at least **two** problems in your answer and use examples from the places you have studied.

(6)

Spelling, punctuation and grammar.

(4)

(Total for Question 5 = 12 marks)

TOTAL FOR SECTION B = 29 MARKS
TOTAL FOR PAPER = 54 MARKS

SPaG mark scheme – Unit 1/Section B (Foundation/Higher Tiers)

Level	Mark	Descriptor
SPaG Level 0	0	Errors severely hinder the meaning of the response or candidates do not spell, punctuate or use the rules of grammar within the context of the demands of the question.
SPaG Level 1	1	Threshold performance Candidates spell, punctuate and use the rules of grammar with reasonable accuracy in the context of the demands of the question. Any errors do not hinder meaning in the response. Where required, they use a limited range of specialist terms appropriately.
SPaG Level 2	2-3	Intermediate performance Candidates spell, punctuate and use the rules of grammar with considerable accuracy and general control of meaning in the context of the demands of the question. Where required, they use a good range of specialist terms with facility.
SPaG Level 3	4	High performance Candidates spell, punctuate and use the rules of grammar with consistent accuracy and effective control of meaning in the context of the demands of the question. Where required, they use a wide range of specialist terms adeptly and with precision.

Sample exam question with SPaG assessment - Unit 2/Section B
(Foundation Tier)

SECTION B – ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Answer either Question 5 OR Question 6.

Topic 5: A Wasteful World

If you answer question 5 put a cross in this box ☐ .

Spelling, punctuation and grammar will be assessed in *(e).

*(e) Countries dispose of their waste in many different ways.

For **one** country you have studied, describe the methods being used to dispose of its waste.

(6)

Spelling, punctuation and grammar.

(3)

Chosen country

Description

(Total for Question 5 = 28 marks)

SPaG mark scheme – Unit 2/Section B (Foundation/Higher Tier)

Level	Mark	Descriptor
SPaG Level 0	0	Errors severely hinder the meaning of the response or candidates do not spell, punctuate or use the rules of grammar within the context of the demands of the question.
SPaG Level 1	1	Threshold performance Candidates spell, punctuate and use the rules of grammar with reasonable accuracy in the context of the demands of the question. Any errors do not hinder meaning in the response. Where required, they use a limited range of specialist terms appropriately.
SPaG Level 2	2	Intermediate performance Candidates spell, punctuate and use the rules of grammar with considerable accuracy and general control of meaning in the context of the demands of the question. Where required, they use a good range of specialist terms with facility.
SPaG Level 3	3	High performance Candidates spell, punctuate and use the rules of grammar with consistent accuracy and effective control of meaning in the context of the demands of the question. Where required, they use a wide range of specialist terms adeptly and with precision.

Sample exam question with SPaG assessment - Unit 3/Section B
(Foundation Tier)

SECTION B – PEOPLE ISSUES

Answer EITHER Question 5 OR Question 6.

Topic 5: A Moving World

If you answer Question 5 put a cross in this box ☒ .

Spelling, punctuation and grammar will be assessed in *(f).

*(f) Many people migrate when they retire. One of these retirement flows is an international movement.

For **one** international retirement migration you have studied explain the pull factors that encourage people to move.

(6)

Spelling, punctuation and grammar.

(3)

(Total for Question 5 = 28 marks)

SPaG mark scheme – Unit 3/Section B (Foundation/Higher Tier)

Level	Mark	Descriptor
SPaG Level 0	0	Errors severely hinder the meaning of the response or candidates do not spell, punctuate or use the rules of grammar within the context of the demands of the question.
SPaG Level 1	1	Threshold performance Candidates spell, punctuate and use the rules of grammar with reasonable accuracy in the context of the demands of the question. Any errors do not hinder meaning in the response. Where required, they use a limited range of specialist terms appropriately.
SPaG Level 2	2	Intermediate performance Candidates spell, punctuate and use the rules of grammar with considerable accuracy and general control of meaning in the context of the demands of the question. Where required, they use a good range of specialist terms with facility.
SPaG Level 3	3	High performance Candidates spell, punctuate and use the rules of grammar with consistent accuracy and effective control of meaning in the context of the demands of the question. Where required, they use a wide range of specialist terms adeptly and with precision.

Teaching and learning advice

Teachers and candidates should note that SPaG is essentially made up of two strands:

a) Spell, punctuate and use grammar accurately

It is likely that many schools will have whole-school policies on literacy and on the marking of students' work for SPaG. Students' levels of ability in SPaG are likely to vary significantly from school to school and some teachers may also find that EMAS and SEN staff have resources and strategies to help certain students.

One aspect of grammar that examiners often comment on is the frequent use of 'would of' and 'should of'. There are also occasional scripts with use of text messaging language and students should be made aware of the need to use formal language in examinations.

Where appropriate, SPaG can form a useful focus for starter or plenary sessions in lessons. Across all units there are key words; some focus on commonly used words will benefit the assessment of some students' spelling. Straightforward activities for students with less-developed literacy could also include the use of anagrams, word puzzles or the deliberate misspelling of words which the student then corrects.

b) Specialist vocabulary

There are key words for each of the examination units so teachers might like to draw up a glossary of key terms for students. Where appropriate, this could form a useful focus for starter or plenary sessions in lessons. One straightforward activity could be students orally explaining key vocabulary without using the term whilst other students have to correctly write down the word.

Teachers and students should also note that using specialist vocabulary often saves candidates valuable time during the examination as well as demonstrating geographical understanding.



'Everyday' words	'Everyday' keywords for geography	Specialist keywords for geography	Place names and case studies
necessary ('neccesry') believe ('beleive') independent ('independant') recommend ('reccomend')	vegetation ('vegitation') environment('enviroment') development ('developement') businesses ('buisnesses')	volcano ('volcanoe') desert ('dessert') hydraulic ('hydraulic') trade bloc ('block')	Britain ('Brittain') Antarctic ('Anarctic') Cairo ('Cayro') Mumbai ('Mumbaye')
This may require a whole-school approach, in collaboration with other GCSE courses e.g. English and History.	Make sure these words are prominently placed in the classroom. Use them as headings for displays or create laminated 'learning mats'.	Have a 'word of the day' written on the board. Plan to provide such coverage for all the keywords of a topic.	Write out names for students, don't just say them aloud. Incorporate map work, so students see the names often.

Note: Teachers and students should note that it is entirely possible that some candidates may achieve a Level 4 mark for their main response, yet only achieve Level 1 or below for SPaG. Similarly, a candidate marked at Level 1 for their main response could still gain full marks for SPaG

Frequently Asked Questions

Why has the DfE decided that spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) are only to be assessed in English Literature, History, Geography and Religious Studies?

These four subjects have large entries and contain questions that require extended answers. This enables a learner to be assessed on these skills without the assessment of these skills overshadowing their subject knowledge.

How will SPaG be implemented for GCSEs in English Literature, History, Geography and Religious Studies?

The awarding of additional marks for SPaG will affect some externally assessed units taken from January 2013 for English Literature, History and Geography, and from June 2013 for Religious Studies. The additional marks for SPaG will be worth 5% of the total marks for the qualification.

How will question papers indicate to candidates which questions will involve the assessment of accurate SPaG?

There will be instructions above the relevant questions on the papers indicating to students that their spelling, punctuation and grammar will be assessed in that question. They will also be able to see the number of marks available for SPaG for that question.

The assessment of SPaG will be indicated on the front cover of the exam paper, as a rubric and in the question. The number of marks available for SPaG will be indicated both on the front cover and in the question.

Why is a weighting of 5% for SPaG considered appropriate?

A weighting of 5% is considered appropriate as it signifies the importance of these skills but does not assign them so much value that they overshadow subject knowledge.

Will QWC continue to be assessed in GCSE Geography A?

Yes, the assessment of QWC (Quality of Written Communication) in the GCSE Geography A qualification remains unchanged.

Will the new requirements for SPaG apply to candidates with special educational needs, dyslexia, or disabilities such as a visual or hearing impairment?

The new requirements will apply to all candidates. Access Arrangements to allow such candidates appropriate opportunities to demonstrate their abilities are administered by the Joint Council for Qualifications.

Further details can be obtained from the JCQ website: www.jcq.org.uk

Will there be any specific accommodation arrangements put in place for EAL learners in relation to SPaG requirements?

No. Learners who speak English as an Additional Language will not be offered additional accommodation arrangements beyond those administered by the Joint Council for Qualifications.

Further frequently asked questions will be added to the website
www.edexcel.com/gcse2012geography

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