

National 5 Geography

Top tips for pupils to improve their EXAM marks

1. In Sections 1 and 3 of the exam, you have a choice of questions to answer. Make sure that you answer the questions on topics we have studied in class!
This means that;

In Section 1 - choose the **Rivers/Limestone question** and not the Coasts/Glaciation question!

In Section 3 - choose '**Natural Regions**' and '**Environmental Hazards**' and not 'Climate Change', 'Trade and Globalisation' or 'Health' questions!

2. Make sure that you write a developed point for each mark on offer. This means not leaving out things that you know, but can't be bothered writing down!

For example, an undeveloped point - which would not get a mark at N5 is:

- "Limestone is dissolved"

Whereas adding extra details **would** earn you a mark:

- "Limestone is dissolved due to rainwater mixing with carbon dioxide to form a weak carbonic acid"

3. In your answers, mention the **case studies / named examples** that we have looked at. This is also a way of turning an undeveloped point into a developed point. For example:

Section 1: Physical Environments (30 marks)	Section 2: Human Environments (30 marks)	Section 3: Global Issues (20 marks)
<i>Limestone Landscapes and land-use conflict</i> The Yorkshire Dales (e.g. Malham and White Scar Caves)	<i>Population</i> China (1-child policy); Kerala State in India; The Gambia Japan	<i>Natural Regions</i> Amazon Rainforest Borneo Rainforest Alaska and Northern Canada (the Inuit)
<i>River Landscapes</i> The River Clyde and The River Tay	<i>Urban Landscapes</i> Rio de Janeiro in Brazil; Mumbai in India (shanty towns) Glasgow (housing / traffic Management)	<i>Environmental Hazards</i> Mt St Helens Volcano in NW USA; Haiti Earthquake; Honduras and Hurricane Mitch
<i>Weather</i> Fort William and Dundee (the rain shadow effect)	<i>Rural Landscapes</i> Kerala State in India (rice and the green revolution)	

You should also be able to **describe patterns** shown on a map of the world (e.g. a map showing where most earthquakes / volcanoes / tropical storms happen). Basic knowledge of where the continents and large countries are will also be very helpful.

4. Make sure that you **explain** any Geography terminology that you might use.
For example - If mentioning the CBD in an urban landscapes question - write it out in full the first time you use the term (Central Business District).

Top tips for pupils to improve their ASSIGNMENT marks

1. Make the most of your two A4 'Processed Information' Sheets. In particular - make sure that they give you enough to write about in the write-up (at least 3 or 4 different areas). Don't write down explanations on these sheets as copying explanations from them will **not** be rewarded with any marks in the write-up.
2. **Describe in detail** how exactly you did any two of the fieldwork methods you did. Once you've done this, you can also **evaluate** how effective this particular fieldwork technique was. There are **6 marks** on offer for doing this - with a maximum of 4 marks for any one fieldwork technique. Make sure you get all six of these marks!
3. **Describe** what your graphs are showing - making sure that you quote figures to show how something has changed. There are 3 marks on offer just for doing this. Make sure you get all three of these marks!
4. **Explain** what your graphs are showing - using your Geography knowledge. You should have thought about this long before doing the final write-up! The graphs are meant to act as prompts - jogging your memory about the points you want to make. It's far better that you understand the points you want to make rather than trying to memorise a whole 60 minute write-up without really understanding it. As mentioned, you should have at least 3 or 4 different aspects of your topic that you can explain fully (and don't fall into the trap of only describing and not explaining). Explaining them fully should allow you to write 11 different reasons for changes. Making connections and links between different graphs will also pick up marks.
5. You should come to some sort of overall **conclusion** at the end of your write-up but don't waste time just repeating what you have already explained. If you started the write-up by asking a question (in the "Research topic/issue" space of the write-up template) - writing a final conclusion is easier.
6. You can get access to the marking instructions and write-up templates at the 'Coursework' tab in the National 5 Geography SQA website;

<https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/47446.html>

You can practise doing your write-up as many times as you want before the final write-up in class under exam conditions. In particular - try doing it in the 60-minute time limit! The first time you do this should not be the final write-up!