

Comments on specific sections and questions

Overall performance was matched with the expectations of the examining panel across all sections of the examination. Some questions are intended to be more challenging than others as a means of differentiating between candidates of differing calibre, so individual questions with a low average mark are not considered problematic in and of themselves. Questions 16 and 18(d) are more of a concern; however, in regards to widespread failure of candidates to provide answers of the form expected by the examiners.

Section One: Multiple-choice (15 Marks)

Attempted by 184 candidates Mean 11.51(/15) Max 15.00 Min 3.00

All candidates attempted all questions in this section. Candidate performance was satisfactory and very similar with previous year's results. All questions except questions 8 and 12 achieved over 60% success rate.

Section Two: Short answer (55 Marks)

Attempted by 184 candidates Mean 31.52(/55) Max 49.00 Min 6.50

Candidate performance was generally quite good across this section, although production of explanatory figures by candidates remains a point of notable weakness. Notably, some candidates also still struggle with the fundamentals of illustrative questions (production of a graph from primary data and production of a geological cross-section) that have been consistent elements of the examination for many years and should be expected.

Section Three: Extended answer (30 Marks)

Attempted by 182 candidates Mean 15.57(/30) Max 28.00 Min 2.00

Performance in this section was broadly in line with expectations and previous years. As expected, given the novel format of Question 27, substantially less than half the candidates attempted this question, but responses to this largely open-ended question scored well, indicating it may have attracted more able candidates and therein provided a mechanism for them to differentiate themselves.