

Subject: Geography

Level: 3

Standards: 91426, 91427, 91429

Part A: Commentary

Candidates should focus on the quality of their response, rather than the length. Including everything they know, because they have the time to write it all down, will not necessarily result in a better answer and can in fact result in a response that is not focused on answering the question, or part of the standard being assessed.

Candidates are reminded of the need to integrate specific case study evidence into their answers. Integrated evidence that is specific to the environment being examined enables candidates to better demonstrate analysis. The evidence from maps, diagrams, and cross sections supports written work but does not replace the need to use specific information in the written work.

Candidates should also use the planning spaces, where available, to plan their responses.

Part B: Report on standards

91426: Demonstrate understanding of how interacting natural processes shape a New Zealand geographic environment

Examination

The examination consisted of one question that required candidates to include a map or diagram to support their written response. The question required the candidate to analyse how different processes operate and interact to create spatial variations in a named, New Zealand geographic environment. Candidates were required to integrate supporting case study evidence that would demonstrate their geographic knowledge and understanding of a specific geographic environment.

Observations

Many candidates used the wording of the question in their first paragraph. Those who had a clear introduction tended to achieve in the assessment, as their responses were more likely to focus on the intent of the question. However, many candidates were limited by a lack of detail in their answers. Detailed diagrams with greater levels of annotation enabled candidates to meet the standard at a high Merit or Excellence level.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- ensured they addressed all three key points in the question – spatial variations, natural processes, and interaction
- included at least some specific evidence about the spatial variation(s) with the environment.

Candidates who were awarded **Not Achieved** commonly:

- lacked specific case study information
- demonstrated limited understanding of spatial variation
- wrote responses that did not address the question
- wrote around the formation of their chosen environment
- provided incomplete or brief responses
- lacked clear annotations on a map
- labelled their map with names of features and locations.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- wrote complete responses, with a good level of case study detail
- addressed the question fluently
- showed good understanding of the interaction of processes, and the creation of spatial variations
- annotated a diagram or map to support the written answer.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- linked geographic ideas and concepts to a specific context
 - annotated diagrams with supporting case study evidence
 - wrote well-structured responses with connected points and paragraphs
 - demonstrated a comprehensive understanding about the environment
 - integrated a high level of specific detail in their responses
 - included clear evidence of insightful analysis in their responses
 - explained how processes interacted using geographical terminology and concepts.
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91427: Demonstrate understanding of how a cultural process shapes geographic environment(s)

Examination

The examination consisted of one question that required candidates to include a map or diagram to support their written response, analysing how the operation of a cultural process creates spatial or temporal variations in their chosen geographic environment. Candidates were required to explain how external factors within a process affect each other and how external factors can impact a process. Candidates were required to integrate supporting case study evidence that would demonstrate their geographic knowledge and understanding of a specific geographic environment and a cultural process that shapes it.

Observations

Candidates should read all parts of the question in the examination papers carefully before starting their responses. Responses should be targeted to the question asked and key ideas conveyed in a concise, technical, and detailed way. Candidates who wrote pre-learned responses on the operation of the process generally did not address the question; many struggled to move past Achievement unless the changes in the operation of the process were linked as the cause of changes either over time or space in the geographic environment.

While maps and/or diagrams were not specifically required, those provided needed to be relevant to the question answered. For example, it is inappropriate to provide one locational map for a temporal variation response or a location map of features without annotations for a spatial variation response. Diagrams and/or maps required annotation with geographic environment specific information to be useful.

Responses that contained technical detail such as the use of models like the Butler model, cumulative causation, bid rent theory and geographic terms like allocentric/psychocentric, agglomeration, showed a higher level of understanding.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- named a cultural process and a clearly defined geographic environment
- included a map and/or diagram relevant to their geographic environment
- demonstrated a basic understanding of the operation of their selected cultural process in either their map or written response
- focused more on how the cultural process operated over time or space, with basic and in some cases inferred links to specified changes caused in the environment
- provided some simplistic reasoning that linked the operation of their selected cultural process to changes over time or space in their environment
- described and partially explained variations created in a geographic environment though these were not analysed with any depth.

Candidates who were awarded **Not Achieved** commonly:

- were unable to name a cultural process or a clearly defined geographic environment and the selection of a process or environment was not evident in the written response
- did not include any map or diagram
- wrote descriptive answers that listed facts, described spatial patterns, or provided a history of the environment, without any links to how the operation of the cultural process changed an environment over time or space
- misinterpreted the question and wrote a response which was all about impacts caused by the operation of the process with no links to variations over time or space
- did not show sufficient understanding of spatial and temporal variations
- only inferred reasons for changes in the environment over time or over space
- did not have a sufficient range of variations explained (i.e., more than one)
- failed to include any references to time or named locations/spatial patterns within their response
- showed limited understanding of how their cultural process operates.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- named a cultural process and a clearly defined geographic environment
- constructed a relevant map or diagram in the space provided or within their written response that demonstrated detailed understanding of the operation of their process, or variations over time, or variations over space
- demonstrated a detailed understanding using some geographic terminology and an in-depth analysis of how a cultural process operates to cause temporal or spatial variations in a selected geographic environment
- linked the operation of the process and the variations caused over time or space
- provided detailed case study evidence relating to their selected geographic environment to support their response.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- named the cultural process and a clearly defined geographic environment
- constructed a relevant diagram or map that demonstrated detailed understanding of the operation of their selected process or variations caused over time or space
- provided a comprehensive analysis of how temporal or spatial variations in a geographic environment were created as a result of the operation of the cultural process
- analysed the links between elements of the cultural process; these links were then clearly connected to the outcome of changes over time or space in the environment
- integrated supporting case study evidence throughout their response

- demonstrated insight by including correct geographic terminology/geographic models in their response
 - used the planning page and expressed ideas logically and fluently by breaking variations into time frames, elements, or spatial patterns.
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91429: Demonstrate understanding of a given environment(s) through selection and application of geographic concepts and skills

Examination

The examination consisted of one question in three parts that required candidates to select and use geographic skills and concepts to demonstrate their understanding of lithium mining and sustainability for the future in Bolivia.

Candidates demonstrated their understanding of geographic skills through their description of the geography (size, location, and extent) of the Uyuni Salt Flat. The question required candidates to demonstrate their conceptual understanding by discussing the reasons for the natural or cultural environment being suitable for lithium mining and why the future of lithium mining is or is not likely to be sustainable for Bolivia.

Observations

Candidates must ensure that for this standard, they use the resources in a way that demonstrates they know, understand, and can apply geographic skills. Candidates should not rely too heavily on the written resource material and must consider a range of aspects of the resources to make connections between them.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- diluted the quality of their responses by using resources and ideas not relevant to the question
- selected some appropriate resources to support their answers
- gave a basic justification and provided some evaluation of the sustainability of mining lithium in Bolivia
- considered sustainability but did not focus on the future for Bolivia
- considered sustainability in part (b) rather than suitability.

Candidates who were awarded **Not Achieved** commonly:

- copied large amounts from the text
- applied concepts that were not relevant to the questions
- presented conflicting information
- lacked understanding or integration of geographic concepts.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- described the precise location of the study area by using geographic coordinates and/or a combination of distance and direction
- described the size of the study area by using accurate measurements
- explained in detail why the natural environment of the study area was suitable for lithium mining. The explanation focused on more than one reason (geology and climate) and was detailed
- discussed the possible negative effects that lithium mining can have on both the natural and cultural environment
- focused their response on the question being asked rather than writing a long answer with too much irrelevant information
- considered sustainability from either two perspectives, or analysed two aspects of sustainability
- utilised a range of resources to answer a question rather than focusing only on one resource.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- considered the geography of the Uyuni Salt Flat using both visual and textual resources
- discussed in detail the possible negative effects that lithium mining can have on both the natural and cultural environment
- discussed the positive effects of lithium mining, on a global and local scale
- presented environmental, economic, and social perspectives
- showed insight, making connections between various features which were not stated in the resources
- reached a clear and justified conclusion.