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# **GCSE EXAMINERS' REPORTS**

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**GCSE (NEW)  
BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

**SUMMER 2022**

Grade boundary information for this subject is available on the WJEC public website at:  
<https://www.wjecservices.co.uk/MarkToUMS/default.aspx?!=en>

### **Online Results Analysis**

WJEC provides information to examination centres via the WJEC secure website. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.

### **Annual Statistical Report**

The annual Statistical Report (issued in the second half of the Autumn Term) gives overall outcomes of all examinations administered by WJEC.

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## BUILT ENVIRONMENT

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#### UNIT 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

##### General Comments

This was the first occasion on which this unit has been taught by centres. Analysis of the candidate profile shows that candidates in the cohort were nearly all 15 years of age and sitting the examination at the end of the first year of their course studies. Teaching staff and candidates are to be commended for their efforts in preparing to sit the examination despite the challenging conditions that have impacted on teaching in schools in recent times. The examining team felt that a lack of experience in sitting formal written exams of this type was often apparent in the candidates' answers. Candidates should be encouraged to provide further detail and more concise justification in their responses to questions that are to be awarded 2 or more marks. It is also suggested that candidates should take time to read and contemplate questions fully, in order to understand what exactly is being asked of them.

##### Comments on individual questions/sections

- Q.1** Part (a) was intended as an accessible introduction to the paper. Most candidates were able to gain marks by stating at least one type of house built in the UK. Parts (b) and (c) were less well answered due to a lack of understanding of "building services" and "mechanical services". The overall facility factor for this question was 40.5%.
- Q.2** This proved to be the best answered and most accessible question on the paper, with a mean mark of 5.1 out of 8 and a facility factor of 63.3%. Responses to part (c) could have been further improved with a more detailed understanding of the process of converting timber for use in construction. Many candidates knew that trees were cut down, but additional knowledge of the processes involved was limited.
- Q.3** This question had a facility factor of 43.9%. Most candidates understood the meaning of a building's "end of life" and were able to state one detail of a pre-demolition plan and one safety procedure.
- Q.4** This was the least successfully answered question on the paper, with a mean mark of 0.4 out of 4 marks and a facility factor of 10.6%. Candidates were required to compare features and properties of religious buildings with those of commercial buildings. The majority tended to describe details that were unrelated to the features and properties of the built environment as set out in the course specification and the Unit 1 Guidance for Teaching.
- Q.5** This question had a facility factor of 27.9%. Responses to this question were disappointing, with many candidates unable to name and describe two relevant materials to be used in the construction of a block of flats.
- Q.6** This was a fairly straightforward question on the preservation of heritage in buildings. In general, candidates demonstrated insufficient knowledge of this aspect of the specification and is an area to be further developed by centres in future. The facility factor for this question was 29.5%.

- Q.7** An understanding of sustainable construction issues is an essential element in any study of the built environment. The required response to part (a) was concerned with the social, economic and environmental benefits of sustainable construction. Candidates did not demonstrate an accurate knowledge of this vital area of the specification. In part (b), many candidates succeeded in naming a relevant natural product but few gained the extra mark by describing how the named material could be used for insulation purposes. The overall facility factor for this question was 27.3%.
- Q.8** This was another question that asked for knowledge and understanding of sustainable construction practices. The mean mark of 2.9 out of 10 and facility factor of 29.0% demonstrates that increased focus on this curriculum area is needed by centres in preparation for future examinations.
- Q.9** As in questions 1 (b) and (c), candidates found it difficult to differentiate between general building trades and the trades involved in the installation of building services. In consequence, many candidates missed out on easily attainable marks for part (a). It should be noted that page 19 of the course specification provides sufficient information on the roles and responsibilities of land surveyors, joiners and carpenters to enable candidates to have gained full marks for parts (b) and (c). This question had a facility factor of 26.4%.
- Q.10** This was the one question on the paper in which the candidates' quality of written communication is assessed as an element of the marking scheme. The stem of the question presented a fairly detailed construction site scenario and candidates were asked to evaluate the risks and necessary control measures required when working at height. Few candidates were able to compose an extended piece of writing that analysed the scenario in sufficient detail to access the higher mark bands. The facility factor for this question was 27.9%.

### **Summary of key points**

Centres are advised to:

- continue to develop the candidates' ability to differentiate between general building and building services in construction
- teach candidates that 2-mark questions such as 5 and 7 (b) require something to be stated or named for 1 mark and then an explanation or justification to be added to earn the second mark
- place a greater emphasis on the teaching of sustainability in construction
- further emphasise a knowledge and understanding of the importance and benefits of heritage buildings in the built environment
- prepare the candidates fully for questions, such as this year's question 10, that require an extended and more developed written response to a given scenario.



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