**Command Words WJEC AS Geography**

Candidates should be familiar with the command terms and phrases used in WJEC examination questions at AS/A Geography. A limited range of terms are used, with more challenging terms largely confined to A2. Most of these have already been used in the new examination papers. There is a progression in terms of demand between AS and A2 although these are not exclusive and mark allocation and timing indicate the level of detail.

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| **Compare** | Give a point by point identification of **similarities and** **differences** or contrasts. There are usually marks reserved for the explicit use of comparative adjectives e.g. however, whereas, larger than, smaller, steeper, less densely. |
| **Contrast** | Give a point by point identification of **differences only.** |
| **Describe** | Identify distinctive features and give descriptive, factual detail. This is one of the most widely used command words. Unless the question says ‘describe and explain’, never explain (e.g. writing ‘because’) as there will be no credit given. This is a very easy way to waste time; especially where resource based questions such as G1 and G2 part (a) questions ask for a **description** that may ask to set out the main **patterns, trends, characteristics, distributions, effects, relationships** |
| **Define** | Give the precise meaning of a term. The question structure of AS and A2 units does not allow short commands of this type. However, where the question uses specialist terms such as ‘asylum seeker’, it is good practice to start with a definition before moving on to the body of the answer. This will help to avoid confusion and provide a clear focus for both you and the examiner. |
| **Discuss** | Describe and explain relevant points and build up a balanced argument with supporting detail. At AS the level of detail and discussion will be guided by the mark and time allocation and the level of discussion expected will be less than at A2. |
| **Evaluate** | **Evaluate** asks the candidate to give an overall assessment of value with a justification of conclusions or viewpoints. At AS this command will be used in relation to questions about the enquiry process in G1 and G2 Question 3 (c), or where the term ‘evaluate’ is used in the Key Question or Content columns of the Specification. |
| **Explain** | Give reasons or causes. Show an understanding of how or why something has occurred. |
| **Identify** | Point out and name from a number of possibilities. The command will be used in conjunction with ‘describe’ or ‘explain’. |
| **Illustrate** | Refer to a case study or example. It does not mean ‘draw’, although appropriate maps or diagrams enhance case studies. |
| **Justify** | Explain why your choice is better than the possible options. |
| **Outline** | Give a brief summary of the main characteristics. Where questions ask for an **outline of the main reasons** then a summary explanation is needed. |
| **Use the information in Figure X to describe** | Your answer must be based on the resources provided and have a direct reference to the resource**.** |
| **Suggest reasons why** | Put forward a plausible explanation from your wider geographical understanding and not just actual knowledge. |
| **Suggest and justify** | Put forward an idea and explain your choice. |
| **With the aid of an annotated** | Annotation requires labelling plus some explanation or extended comment on or near the diagram. |

**Command Words WJEC A2 Geography**

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| **Account** | Give reasons for. |
| **Assess** | This is an evaluative question - weigh up the importance of the subject. This means there are a number of possible explanations/arguments/outcomes. You need to give the main ones and then say which you tend to favour. |
| **Classify** | Divide into groups or categories. |
| **Discuss** | Usually you are expected to build up an argument about an issue and to present more than one side of the evidence with supporting examples. This creates a written debate identifying both positive and negative points and then you must **reach a conclusion** from the debate. You should both describe and explain. Try to create a balanced answer and summarise your view at the end. |
| **Evaluate** | Evaluate requires an overall statement of the overall quality or value of the feature/issue being considered. You need to state a viewpoint, after consideration of the evidence. In both cases your own judgement/opinion is wanted. Although an opinion cannot be marked incorrect, credit is given for the justification of the position you’ve taken up. It usually best not to adopt an extreme viewpoint; a balanced answer is best.  With assess and evaluate, particularly in G4, there are many occasions where there are two sides to an argument and evidence should be put forward for both sides, or that certain strategies or actions may have beneficial outcomes but also costs attached to them.  Opinions and conclusions should be presented clearly and supported with appropriate evidence and sound argument |
| **To what extent** | Give possible explanations for and against and justify which youtend to favour. |
| **How far do you agree** |
| **Examine** | Investigate in detail, offering evidence for or against a point of view or judgement. |

**Classification of command words**

Command terms can also be classified in terms of the assessment objectives being assessed by particular questions. There is a progression in demand from AO1 to AO2 in extended prose answers while AO3 is specific to particular skills and examination questions.

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| **Assessment Objective** | **Command** | **Depth**  Expected level of detail will depend on time and mark allocation and will be higher at A2 |
| **AO1:**  Knowledge and understanding of processes, concepts, scale and examples | **Describe**  **Identify**  **Outline** | Candidates demonstrate knowledge and understanding briefly and succinctly. |
| **AO2:**     * Application of knowledge and understanding through analysis, interpretation and evaluation of geographical information, issues and viewpoints. * Application of understanding in unfamiliar contexts. * Synthesis and evaluation of geographical information**.** | **Assess**  **Classify**  **Explain**  **Suggest**  **Compare**  **Contrast**  **Discuss**  **Evaluate**  **Examine**  **Justify** | Candidates are required to use, analyse and apply knowledge and understanding, construct an argument and make judgments based on evidence. |
| **AO3:**  Use of skills, resources, methods and techniques to carry out research, investigate questions and issues, reach conclusions and communicate and evaluate findings. | Based on research methods and techniques used in an investigation and the skills acquired, candidates may be asked to :  **Describe**  **Discuss**  **Explain**  **Outline**  **Suggest**  **Examine**  **Evaluate** | Candidates are required to demonstrate knowledge, understanding and application of the data handling skills acquired through the themes and through fieldwork/research |

SJ/HJ/W2(12)