

Almost every lost point is a definition given where a real example was wanted, or one half of a comparison. Everything below is a rule the readers apply.

How the readers score the free response

✗ Answering a COMPARE question by describing one case.

✓ **The response must include BOTH – both concepts, or both maps, in the same sentence.**

The guidelines state the response must include both concepts in the comparison for the point.

SG 2 years

✗ Giving two reasons that are the same reason twice.

✓ **Make them genuinely different – the guidelines withhold a point paired with another that repeats it.**

The scoring notes state a point is not awarded if it is paired with an earlier one making the same claim.

SG2023

✗ Answering with a definition where an example was asked for.

✓ **Name a real place, policy or pattern.**

The course assesses application to real-world cases, and a definition is not one.

CED Skill 3

✗ Explaining a ranking without the measure behind it.

✓ **Name the indicator: a higher GNI per head, a longer life expectancy, more mean years of schooling.**

The guidelines print those exact indicators as the accepted explanations.

SG2023

✗ Writing a long introduction before answering part A.

✓ **Answer the labelled parts in order, with no preamble.**

There are no marks for an introduction, and the parts are scored independently.

CED Skill 1

■ Where a stimulus map or chart is given, refer to it explicitly. The application points depend on it.

SG 2 years

1 · Thinking Geographically

✗ Confusing absolute with relative location.

✓ **Absolute is coordinates; relative is position with respect to something else.**

The distinction underpins the whole course's spatial vocabulary.

vs

CED 1.3

✗ Saying a map projection is ‘wrong’.

✓ **Every projection distorts something – say which property it preserves and which it sacrifices.**

The trade-off is the assessed content.

CED 1.5

2 · Population and Migration Patterns and Processes

✗ Saying a country in stage 2 of the demographic transition has a high growth rate because births rise.

✓ **Births stay high while DEATHS fall, which is what opens the gap.**

The mechanism is what the model explains, and the wrong half makes the answer wrong.

CED 2.6

✗ Explaining migration with one factor.

✓ **Use push and pull together, and note the intervening obstacles.**

The framework is course content and questions ask for both sides.

CED 2.9

✗ Saying migrants face ‘problems’ in the destination.

✓ **Be specific: high housing costs, or no vacancies where the urban population is growing.**

The guidelines print those as the accepted specific answers.

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3 · Cultural Patterns and Processes

✗ Using ‘culture’ where the question names a specific process.

✓ **Name it: relocation diffusion, hierarchical diffusion, contagious diffusion, stimulus diffusion.**

The types are separately assessed and the scenario always matches one.

CED 3.6

✗ Treating a language or religion as fixed.

✓ **Describe how it spread, changed, or blended in that place.**

The course assesses cultural change as a process.

CED 3.4

4 · Political Patterns and Processes

✗ Using ‘nation’ and ‘state’ interchangeably.

✓ **A nation is a people; a state is a political territory; a nation-state is where they coincide.**

The three are separately defined and questions rely on the difference.

CED 4.2

✗ Describing gerrymandering as unfair boundaries.

✓ **Say how: packing, cracking, or stacking, and to what electoral end.**

The specific technique is the assessed content.

CED 4.8

5 · Agriculture and Rural Land-Use Patterns and Processes

✗ Explaining agricultural location without reference to a model.

✓ **Use von Thünen: transport cost and land rent decide what is grown where.**

The model is the analytical tool the unit provides.

CED 5.5

✗ Saying the Green Revolution was good, or bad.

✓ **Give both: higher yields against water use, input costs and reduced crop diversity.**

The balanced answer is what the explanation points reward.

CED 5.9

6 · Cities and Urban Land-Use Patterns and Processes

✗ Applying one urban model to every city.

✓ **Say which model fits and why – concentric zone, sector, multiple nuclei, or a regional variant.**

The choice and its justification are what the question asks for.

CED 6.5

✗ Describing gentrification only as improvement.

✓ **Include displacement and rising rents alongside reinvestment.**

Both effects are assessed, and questions often ask who benefits.

CED 6.9

✗ Saying local governments ‘lack money’.

✓ **Say why: disparities between neighbouring authorities dealing with commuters from elsewhere.**

The guidelines print this specific reasoning as the accepted answer.

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7 · Industrial and Economic Development Patterns and Processes

✗ Describing a country as ‘developed’ or ‘developing’ with no measure.

✓ **Use an indicator – GNI per head, the HDI, or the gender inequality index.**

The course assesses development through named measures.

CED 7.2

✗ Saying an ageing population is a problem without saying for what.

✓ **Be specific: too few working-age people to support the economy or pay the taxes.**

The guidelines print that reasoning as the accepted answer.

SG2023

2 · Population and Migration Patterns and Processes

✗ Reading a population pyramid’s shape without naming the stage.

✓ **Match the shape to the demographic transition stage, and say what the country’s growth is doing.**

The connection between the diagram and the model is what the question asks for.

CED 2.5

✗ Saying the dependency ratio is the number of children.

✓ **It compares the non-working-age population with the working-age one.**

The ratio is a calculated measure and questions ask what it implies.

CED 2.4

3 · Cultural Patterns and Processes

✗ Calling any cultural blending ‘globalisation’.

✓ **Name the process – acculturation, assimilation, or syncretism – and say who changed.**

The three describe different outcomes and the scenario matches one.

CED 3.7

✗ Describing a cultural landscape as scenery.

✓ **Read it as evidence: what the buildings, signs and land divisions say about who lives there.**

Landscape as evidence is the unit’s central skill.

CED 3.2

5 · Agriculture and Rural Land-Use Patterns and Processes

✗ Saying subsistence and commercial farming differ by size.

✓ **They differ by PURPOSE: consumption by the household against sale in a market.**

Scale follows from purpose, and purpose is the definition.

CED 5.4

✗ Describing intensive farming as ‘using machines’.

✓ **Intensive means high input per unit of land – labour, capital or chemicals.**

The input-per-area measure is the definition and applies to hand labour too.

CED 5.3

6 · Cities and Urban Land-Use Patterns and Processes

✗ Explaining urban growth with one cause.

✓ **Combine natural increase with rural-to-urban migration, and name the pull factors.**

The multi-cause answer is what the explanation points reward.

CED 6.3

✗ Using ‘suburbanisation’ and ‘urban sprawl’ interchangeably.

✓ **Suburbanisation is people moving out; sprawl is the low-density, car-dependent form it takes.**

The two are separately defined and one can occur without the other.

CED 6.7

7 · Industrial and Economic Development Patterns and Processes

✗ Saying a country industrialised because it had resources.

✓ **Add the other factors: capital, labour, markets, infrastructure and policy.**

Single-cause development explanations cannot reach the explanation points.

CED 7.4

✗ Treating Rostow’s model as a description of what happens.

✓ **It is a model with assumptions – say which apply here and which do not.**

Evaluating a model’s fit is an assessed skill in this unit.

CED 7.5