A-Level Geography

Five questions on what is happening now

DATA AS AT 15 NOVEMBER 2026 · NEW QUESTIONS EVERY WEEK

How to use this pack. Time yourself, write a full answer, then check it against the mark scheme. Questions 1 and 2 include our mark scheme. Questions 3 to 5 have mark schemes you can unlock free on the website. Marks and skills follow the Curriculum Circle framework. Exam boards set the marks and wording for real papers, so always check your specification.

In the news: England's eroding coast

~3,500

homes at risk of erosion by 2055 in England, even with today's coastal defences

Source: Environment Agency

~20,000

properties could be at risk from coastal change by 2105

Source: Holderness Gazette

£30m

for coastal adaptation pilots announced on 28 January 2026

Source: GOV.UK

£1.4bn

flood and coastal defence investment in 2026/27 across more than 600 schemes

Source: GOV.UK

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QUESTION 1

4 MARKS · CALCULATE AND SUGGEST · APPLICATION · ANALYSIS

Using the data, calculate how many times greater the 2105 figure for properties at risk is than the 2055 figure for homes at risk. Suggest one reason why the two figures may not be directly comparable.

Plan for about 5 minutes.

CC MARK SCHEME · FREE · Application 2 | Analysis 2

- Calculation (2 marks): 20,000 ÷ 3,500 = about 5.7 times (1 mark for method, 1 for answer). Accept 5.7 or 6 if the working is shown.
- Comparability (2 marks): the figures come from different sources and dates, and may measure different things (homes eroded by 2055 even with defences, against properties at risk from coastal change by 2105) (1). Assumptions such as whether defences are maintained and how fast sea level rises could differ (1).

Common mistakes: Dividing the wrong way round. Treating the two figures as like-for-like without checking what each measures.

QUESTION 2

6 MARKS · EXPLAIN · KNOWLEDGE · APPLICATION

Explain two reasons why hard engineering may not protect a coastline in the long term.

Plan for about 8 minutes. Use a named example if you can.

CC MARK SCHEME · FREE · Knowledge 2 | Application 4

- Each reason: identify (1) and explain (2). Maximum 3 marks per reason.
- Cost and design life: sea walls and rock armour are expensive to build and maintain, and they have a limited life, so they can fail if funding stops.
- Effects along the coast: structures such as groynes can starve neighbouring stretches of sediment, increasing erosion further along.
- Rising seas and stronger storms: defences designed for past conditions can be overtopped or undermined as sea level rises.
- Wave energy: a sea wall can reflect waves and scour the beach in front of it.

Common mistakes: Describing what hard engineering is instead of why it may fail. Two reasons that are really the same (for example, “costs a lot” and “is expensive”).

QUESTION 3

9 MARKS · ANALYSE · KNOWLEDGE · APPLICATION · ANALYSIS

Analyse the advantages and disadvantages of managed retreat for homeowners and for local councils.

Plan for about 12 minutes. Refer to a named coastal location.

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QUESTION 4 12 MARKS · ASSESS · APPLICATION · ANALYSIS · EVALUATION

Assess how far cost-benefit analysis should decide which stretches of coast are defended.

Plan for about 15 minutes. Refer to the investment figures and a named place.

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QUESTION 5 20 MARKS · ASSESS · APPLICATION · EVALUATION

Assess whether England should continue to protect eroding coastlines with hard engineering, or move towards adaptation and managed retreat.

Plan for about 30 minutes. Use a named location, such as Thorpeness in Suffolk or another you have studied.

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Keep practising

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Free 7-day taster: Tectonic processes and hazards, with practice questions and instant feedback. No card needed. thecurriculumcircle.com/taster/

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