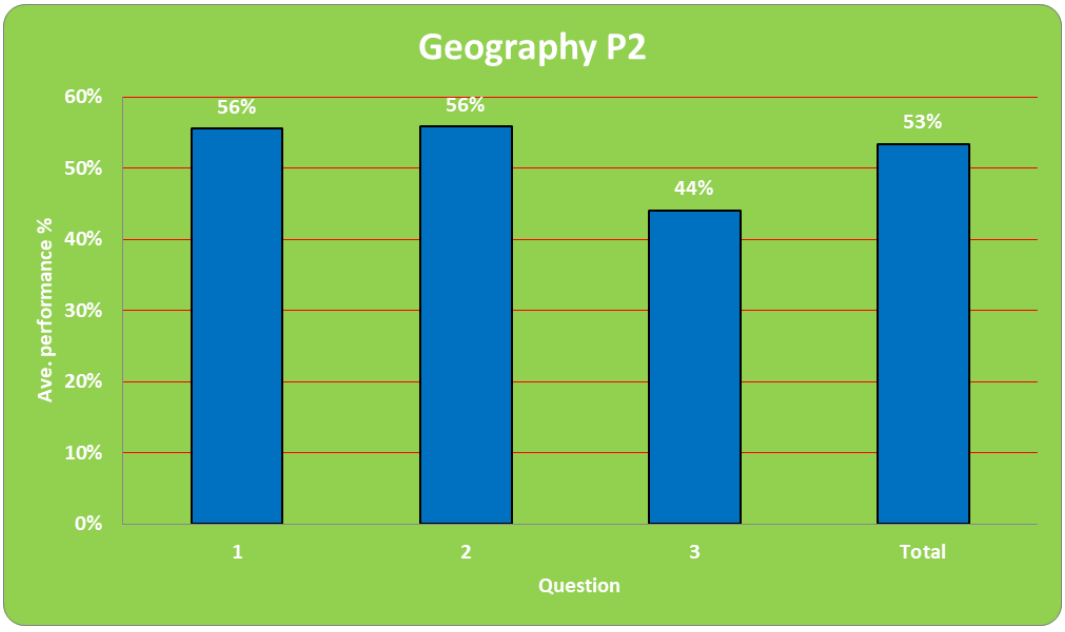
basic education
Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF LEARNER RESPONSES
AND
EVALUATION OF THE QUESTION PAPERS (PER PAPER)
NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE 2025
WESTERN CAPE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT	GEOGRAPHY		
QUESTION PAPER	1	2	3
DURATION OF PAPER	3 HOURS		
INTERNAL MODERATOR	REGAN FORD		
CHIEF MARKER	BEN MALAN		
DATES OF MARKING	FROM: 29 NOVEMBER 2025	TO: 10 DECEMBER 2025	
HEAD OF EXAMINATION	MS LM BREDENKAMP		

REPORT 2: QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF LEARNER RESPONSES

SECTION 1: *(GENERAL OVERVIEW OF LEARNER PERFORMANCE IN THE QUESTION PAPER AS A WHOLE)*



Question	Topic	Ave. performance %
1	Rural and Urban Settlements	56%
2	Economic Geography of South Africa	56%
3	Geographical Skills and Techniques	44%
Total		**53%**

The analysis of the 100 sampled learners revealed commendable overall performance, achieving an average score of 53%. A breakdown of performance by question is as follows:

Question 1 Rural and Urban Settlements:

Learners performed well, achieving an average score of 56%.

Question 2: Economic Geography of South Africa:

Learners performed well, achieving an average score of 56%.

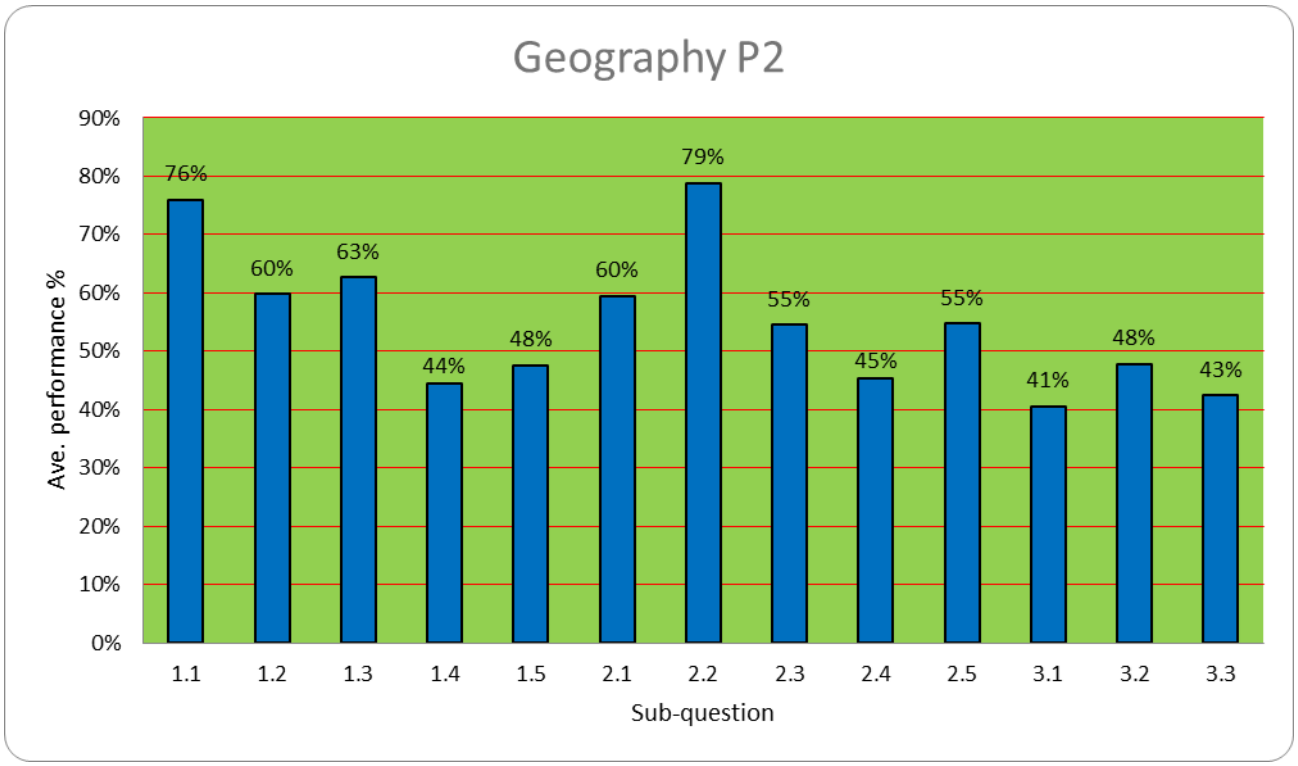
Question 3: Geographic skills and techniques:

This question presented the greatest challenge, resulting in the lowest average score of 44%.

The data highlights areas of strength while identifying mapwork as a focus for further instructional support and improvement.

SECTION 2: ***COMMENT ON CANDIDATES' PERFORMANCE IN INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS***

(It is expected that a comment will be provided for each question)



Sub-question	Topic	Ave. performance %
1.1	Rural and Urban Settlements	76%
1.2	Rural and Urban Settlements	60%
1.3	Rural and Urban Settlements	63%
1.4	Rural and Urban Settlements	44%
1.5	Rural and Urban Settlements	48%
2.1	Economic Geography of South Africa	60%
2.2	Economic Geography of South Africa	79%
2.3	Economic Geography of South Africa	55%
2.4	Economic Geography of South Africa	45%
2.5	Economic Geography of South Africa	55%
3.1	Geographical Skills and Techniques	41%
3.2	Geographical Skills and Techniques	48%
3.3	Geographical Skills and Techniques	43%

QUESTION 1

(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?

Overall Performance

Question 1 achieved an average score of 56%, making it the joint-best answered question in the paper. This result is slightly lower than the 57% average achieved for this question in 2024.

Sub-question Performance

Question 1.1: Achieved the second-highest average score in the entire paper at 76%.
Question 1.2: Performed well, with an average score of 60%.
Question 1.3: Was well-answered, achieving an average score of 63%.
Question 1.4: Scored an average of 44%, making it the third poorest answered sub-question in the paper.
Question 1.5: Scored an average of 48%.

Paragraph Question

Sub-question 1.5.4: This was the best performing of the two paragraph questions in the paper, with an average score of $\frac{4,14}{8}$ (51.75%). This marks a notable improvement compared to the $\frac{3,79}{8}$ (47.4%) scored for the paragraph question in Question 1 in 2024.

In summary, while Question 1 performed slightly below its historical average, sub-question 1.1 stood out as the strongest, whereas sub-questions 1.4 and 1.5 require targeted intervention to improve performance in future assessments.

(b) Why was the question answered poorly? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.

Sub-question 1.4

Question 1.4 was poorly answered, primarily because many candidates lacked understanding of

the concepts being tested.

Key reasons for this poor performance include:

Question 1.4.4: Many candidates did not limit their responses to economic reasons and offered social and other reasons., resulting in a loss of 4 marks.

Question 1.4.5: A significant number of candidates could not explain the incompatibility between high income residential areas and heavy industries.

Sub-question 1.5

Question 1.5 was relatively poorly answered, primarily because many candidates do not limit themselves to the category of factors being asked, ie, economic, social, etc. In the paragraph question they often did not limit their answer to the impact on the economy of Wynberg and tended to speak about the impact on individuals.

(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.

Enhancing Learners' Categorisation Skills

Learners need to be taught how to categorise information into social, economic, and environmental categories. Many struggle to limit their responses to the required category, which impacts their performance. To address this:

Teachers should integrate categorisation exercises into their lessons.

Learners should be exposed to past examination question papers to familiarize themselves with the categorisation requirements.

Training for Teachers

Subject advisors should:

Host additional content training workshops to enhance teachers' understanding of specific concepts and provide detailed guidelines for instruction.

Organise training sessions focused on strategies for teaching learners how to effectively answer "Explain how/where" questions and properly use facts and qualifiers in their responses.

Standardisation of Resources

The variation in candidate responses underscores the need for a standardised textbook. A consistent resource would ensure that all learners and teachers have access to the same information, thereby reducing disparities in understanding and performance.

By implementing these recommendations, educators can better support learners in mastering the required skills and concepts, leading to improved outcomes.

(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.

Emphasis on Core Concepts

Educators must prioritise teaching fundamental concepts, ensuring learners fully understand key distinctions, such as the difference between social, economic, and environmental impacts.

Writing Skills

Encourage candidates to write in full sentences.
Train candidates to write paragraph-style responses for paragraph questions, avoiding bullet points or listing answers vertically.
Emphasize that while guidelines may suggest an eight-line response, candidates should be encouraged to write more if necessary to fully address the question.

Preparation Strategies

Teach candidates the importance of carefully reading and adhering to instructions.

Mentoring and Professional Development for Educators

Mentoring novice teachers: Implement weekly meetings to share resources, discuss core notes, and provide guidance for inexperienced geography teachers.
Subject advisor engagement: Educators should maintain regular communication with subject advisors to stay updated on the latest developments in the curriculum.
Workshops and training: Encourage educators to attend workshops and courses regularly to support continuous professional development and the growth of the subject.

Engagement in National Assessment Processes

Educators should consider writing the competency tests and, if successful, applying to become NSC markers. This experience can significantly enhance their understanding of assessment standards and marking criteria.
By implementing these strategies, educators can foster better understanding and skill development among candidates while advancing their own professional growth.

QUESTION 2

(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?

Overall Performance

Question 2 achieved an average score of 56%, making it the joint-best answered question in the paper. This result is significantly lower than the 63% average achieved for this question in 2024.
A contributing factor to this poorer performance is that three sub-questions required a response involving both a factor and a qualifier compared to the one last year.

Sub-question Performance

Question 2.1: Performed relatively well, with an average score of 60%.

Question 2.2: Achieved an average score of 79%, making it the best answered sub-question in the paper.

Question 2.3 and 2.5: Achieved an average score of 55%.

Question 2.4: Was moderately answered, achieving an average score of 45%.

Paragraph Question

Sub-question 2.3.5: This was the poorest-performing paragraph question in the paper, achieving an average score of $\frac{3,29}{8}$ (41.1%). This represents a decrease from the $\frac{4,9}{8}$ (61.43%) achieved for the corresponding paragraph question in Question 2 in 2024.

In summary, Question 2 demonstrated strong overall performance, with notable successes in sub-questions 2.2, 2.3, and 2.5.

(b) Why was the question answered poorly? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.

Question 2 was relatively well-answered, with sub-question 2.4 on the Dube TradePort being the only one where the average mark was under 50%.

Part-marking Sub-questions

Question 2 included three part-marking sub-questions, a format that candidates often struggle with. This difficulty arises because candidates frequently confuse factors with qualifiers, impacting their ability to provide accurate and complete responses.

(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.

Examination Techniques

Educators should dedicate time to revising examination techniques with candidates. This includes:

- Teaching strategies for analysing and understanding the requirements of different question types.
- Providing practice opportunities to enhance candidates' ability to structure accurate and well-organized responses.

These additional measures, alongside the recommendations provided in the Question 1 section, will help address persistent challenges and improve overall performance.

Approach to Part-marking Questions

Candidates need to be thoroughly trained to address part-marking questions, including specific instructions such as:

Recognising and responding appropriately to prompts like "explain why," "explain how," "name

and explain," and "identify with reasons."
Planning responses by first identifying factors and then justifying (qualifying) them to produce well-structured answers.

(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.

Refer to this question in Question 1

QUESTION 3

(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?

Overall Performance

Question 3 was the lowest-performing question in the paper, achieving the lowest results among the three questions. However, it must be noted that the question was better answered than it was last year.

Sub-question Performance

Question 3.1 (Mapwork Calculations and Skills): This sub-question was poorly answered, with an average score of 41%, an improvement on the 37% achieved in 2024.
Question 3.2 (Map Interpretation): Achieved an average score of 48%, slightly below the 51% achieved in 2024.
Question 3.3 (GIS): This sub-question shows this biggest improvement in the paper, with an average score of 43% compared to the 23% achieved in 2024

Summary

The focused intervention and additional support that was provided for candidates in 2025 is reflected in the improvement in Question 3 this year.

(b) Why was the question answered poorly? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.

General Performance

Candidate performance in this question was generally poor, with no specific sub-question standing out as an example of weak answering. This suggests a widespread challenge in addressing the requirements of mapwork across many candidates. The question has however displayed a marked improvement since 2024.

Variation Across Schools

Performance trends indicate that mapwork is not taught with equal emphasis across all schools. Results at individual centres tend to be uniform, suggesting that the quality and thoroughness of mapwork instruction vary significantly between institutions.

Integration of Mapwork in the Curriculum

Currently, mapwork is often taught as a stand-alone section rather than being integrated into the broader curriculum. This approach is not ideal and limits candidates' ability to see the connection between mapwork skills and other aspects of the subject.

(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.

Integrated Teaching Approach

Schools should adopt a more integrated approach by embedding mapwork concepts within all relevant sub-sections of the curriculum. To achieve this:

Every lesson should incorporate mapwork skills and practical activities involving maps.
Educators should focus on building learner confidence by using maps regularly in the classroom and demonstrating their application in diverse contexts.

Professional Development and Standardisation

To standardise mapwork teaching across schools, targeted professional development initiatives should be implemented. These can include:
Workshops and training sessions for educators.
Resource-sharing platforms to disseminate best practices and teaching materials.

Use of Technology in Teaching

Educators are encouraged to integrate technology, such as Google Earth, into their lessons to provide interactive and visual learning experiences that enhance learners' spatial understanding.

Teaching Techniques and Reinforcement

Employ Problem-Based Teaching methods to actively engage learners in solving real-world mapwork challenges.
Reinforce GIS calculations in the classroom to improve learners' competence in this critical area.

Calculation Methodology

Candidates should be trained to:
Show all steps when performing calculations.
Clearly indicate units of measurement to avoid losing marks.

Conclusion

These recommendations aim to enhance the teaching and learning of mapwork, fostering improved outcomes and ensuring a consistent understanding of this critical component of the curriculum among candidates.

(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
Calculation Accuracy Candidates frequently lose marks because they do not follow the required steps for calculations or indicate the appropriate units of measure in their responses. Educators must emphasize the importance of: Adhering to all steps in the calculation process. Clearly stating the correct units of measurement for each calculation. **Focus on Economic and Settlement Mapwork** Educators should ensure that candidates are well-prepared for questions related to economic and settlement mapwork by thoroughly covering these topics during instruction. This preparation will help candidates address these areas confidently in assessments. **Real-life Application of Content** To enhance understanding and retention, educators should promote the application of mapwork content to real-life situations through Problem-Based Teaching and Learning (PBL). This approach encourages critical thinking and problem-solving, helping candidates connect theoretical knowledge to practical scenarios. Implementing these strategies will support improved candidate performance in mapwork-related questions.