

PAPER 4 – RESEARCH TOPICS FOR EXAMINATION IN JUNE 2022

Research guidance

Since Paper 4 relates to *research* topics, exhaustive syllabus content is not provided, allowing candidates to follow their own particular interests within the prescribed topic and giving a range of opportunities for fieldwork. However, guidance is given below for the examination in **2022**, to indicate possible ideas for investigation, and themes for wider study.

Central business districts

Possible ideas for research investigation

- A study to delimit the Central Business District in a small town (or part of the Central Business District in a city)
- An investigation into functional zoning in a Central Business District
- A study of the clustering of services in Central Business Districts
- An investigation of changes in a Central Business District
- A study of zones of assimilation and/or zones of discard in a Central Business District
- A study of the impact of a planning initiative on a Central Business District (e.g. congestion charging)

Examples of possible themes for wider study

- The form and characteristics of Central Business Districts
- The dynamic nature of Central Business Districts
- An examination of the role of economic, environmental and political factors causing change in Central Business Districts
- Initiatives designed to ensure the sustainability of Central Business Districts, e.g. re-branding and gentrification

Exemplification is encouraged in the wider study

Retail patterns

Possible ideas for research investigation

- Changing patterns of retail provision over time in one retail centre
- A comparison of actual and theoretical retail spheres of influence
- The impact of a new retail development on retail patterns in the surrounding area
- A study of the locations of one retail function
- A study of changing shopping habits

Examples of possible themes for wider study

- The spatial pattern of retail provision, including retailing of low/mid/high order goods, in locations ranging from CBDs, shopping parades and corner shops to superstores, retail parks, major regional shopping centres and garden centres
- Shopping hierarchies and changes over time
- Reasons for changes in retail patterns, such as social, economic (including increased car ownership) and technological changes (including online shopping)
- Use of Goad maps and GIS resources

Exemplification is encouraged in the wider study

Environmental degradation

Possible ideas for research investigation

- Investigation of patterns of land degradation in mining/quarrying/industrial or landfill sites
- Soil or vegetation studies in an abandoned quarry
- Investigation of changes in levels of water pollution along a river
- Patterns of noise pollution in relation to a particular development, such as an airport, quarry or major road
- Variations in environmental quality within an urban area

Examples of possible themes for wider study

- The causes and consequences of environmental degradation
- The causes, character, scale and changing nature of land, water and air pollution
- Environmental Impact Assessment
- The management of land, water and air pollution

Exemplification is encouraged in the wider study