

Geography GCSE Graphs

Introduction:

You will always get graphs on your GCSE Geography papers.

It's really important to make sure you get the marks for graphs. They can add up and help gain a grade. But to do that you need to make sure that you do them really well - which gets a little tricky...

Equipment:

You need to make sure you have with you:

- a sharpish pencil (and a spare)
- a ruler - you want a 30cm one for mapwork anyway
- a rubber
- a few coloured pencils might be useful

You need these things. Trust me - I mark papers.

We see, all the time, candidates who clearly aren't equipped. They try and complete a bar chart using a stubby pencil and no ruler. The line gets all wobbly and then they make a mistake. No rubber. It's awful - and they lose marks.

Think about it this way - **how hard is a bar chart to do?** Well, given that they're a piece of cake we, as markers, have every right to expect you to be really, really accurate with the graphs you produce.

a) 101 Graphs:

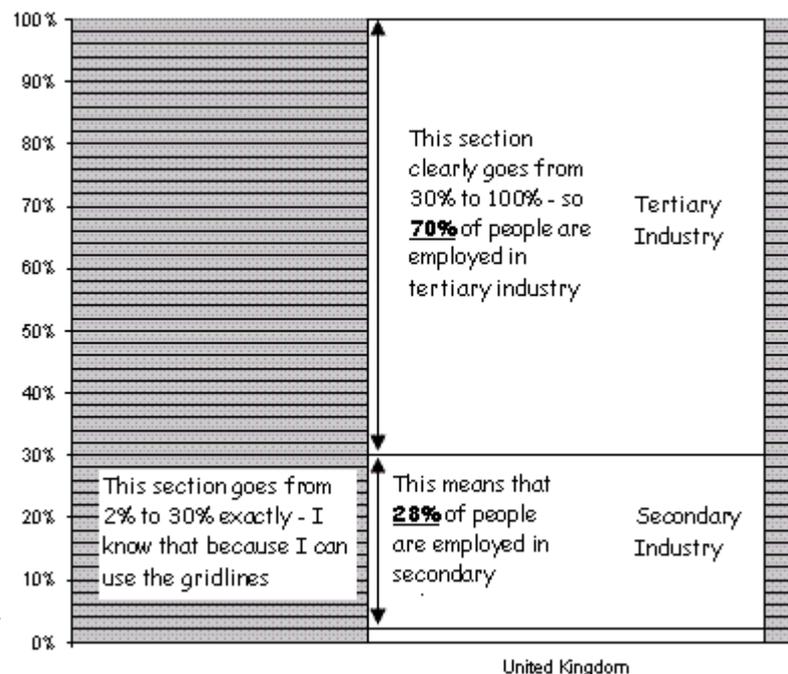
Well, maybe not 101, but you can expect to see:

- bar charts
- pie charts
- line graphs
- population pyramids

Occasionally you might see:

- divided bar charts
- composite line graphs

The key with both of these is to remember that you're looking to work out the size of the particular block. The diagram on the right should help explain this.



You might also get proportional flow lines on maps - these are lines where the width of the line is used to show how many people or things are moving in a particular way. All you need to do with these is get the width of the line right.

b) Key Points:

1. **Read the question** - as always. I know that's obvious, but trust me: people don't always do what they've been asked to do on graph questions!
2. **Accuracy is all important.** If it's a bar chart it needs to be on the line. If I can see a gap, even a tiny little one, it's wrong. Always. Don't think that's fair? How easy are bar charts dude?
3. **Use a pencil** - and rub out mistakes properly
4. **Rulers rock.** They really help you get the accuracy. Believe it.
5. **Make sure you complete any key.** This is a really easy mark do get it! You don't need to use beautiful colouring to do this - just anything which makes the sections or bars different is fine.
6. **Don't rush** - but do work as efficiently as you can.
7. **Check and then double check.** Trust me. Even I make stupid mistakes...
8. **Practice does make (nearly) perfect.** There are partial GCSE papers on the web - the link is on my page at freespace.virgin.net/i.ford You can use these - both tiers are fine for graphs. There are two sets of graph questions you can get from me at school as well.

Just remember: these are easy marks but we don't give them away for something that's "good enough". Good enough usually isn't - make it as close to perfect as you can when it's a graph.