

## Interpreting the questions

You have probably already been told by your teacher to read the exam questions carefully, and answer the question set, not the one you think it might be. That means you need to interpret it to work out exactly what it is asking. So, look at the key words. These include:

- Command words** – these have distinct meanings which are listed opposite
- Theme or topic** – this is what the question is about. The examiner who wrote the question will have tried to narrow the theme down, and you need to spot how so that you do not write everything you know about the theme.
- Focus** – this shows how the theme has been narrowed down.
- Case studies** – look to see if you are asked for specific examples.

Here is an example of a question that has been interpreted using the key words above – these questions are part of a 30-mark question:

### • Command words

In (c), 'suggest ways in which...' means you must give more than one way to show the effects of changing land use.

In (d), 'Referring to examples...' means you are being asked for either a case study or named examples of hard engineering.

In (d), 'discuss how effective...' means that you need to weigh up the good and bad points about hard engineering.

### • Theme or topic

This question is for Rivers, floods and management, looking specifically at the causes of flooding and flood management.

Study Figure 3.

(c) Suggest ways in which changing land use can contribute to the likelihood of floods such as these. (6 marks)

(d) Referring to examples, discuss how effective hard engineering can be in controlling floods. (15 marks)

### • Case studies

Choose one named area only.

### • Focus

Part (c) asks you to talk about 'ways'. You need to be specific in suggesting how (for example) urbanisation or deforestation can contribute to the likelihood of flooding, not everything you know about floods.

Part (d) asks you to discuss the effectiveness of hard engineering. You must name particular methods of hard engineering.