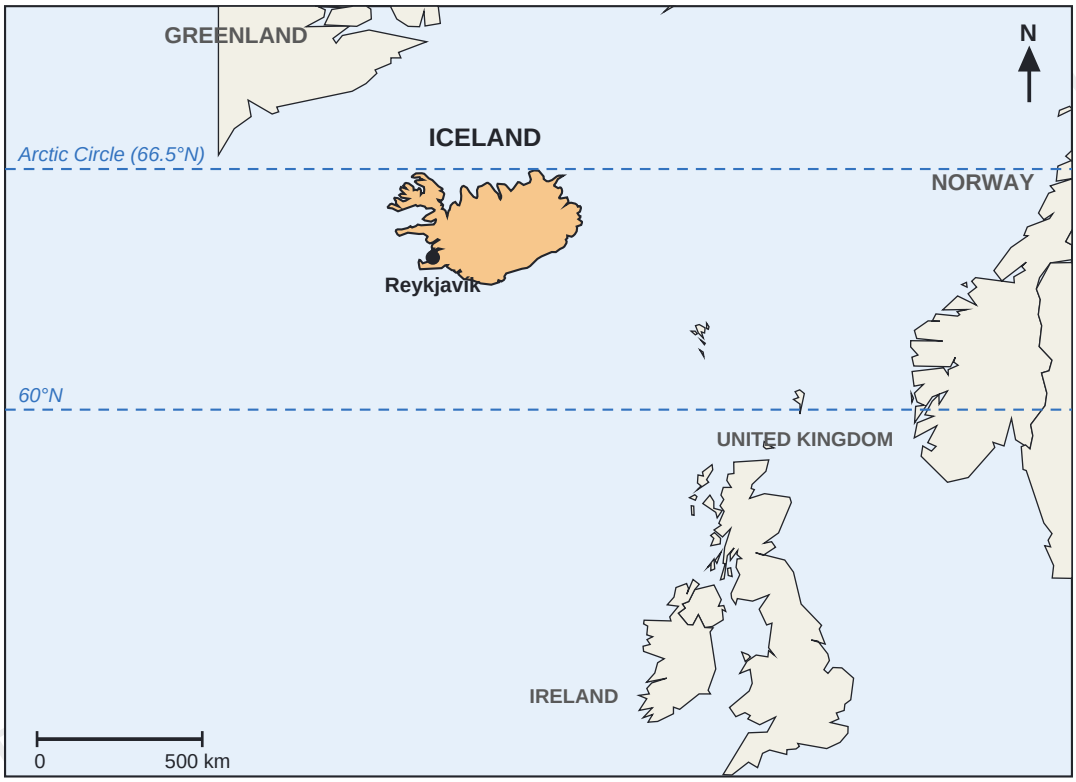
RESOURCE BOOKLET: ICELAND

Read all the resources (A to I) before you start the question

Resources A to I describe the environment of Iceland. Definitions of the key concepts used in the question: location (where a place is on Earth), accessibility (how easily a place can be reached), natural environment (the land, climate, water, plants and animals), cultural environment (the changes people make: buildings, roads, farms, towns), and change (a difference over time).

Resource A: Where is Iceland?

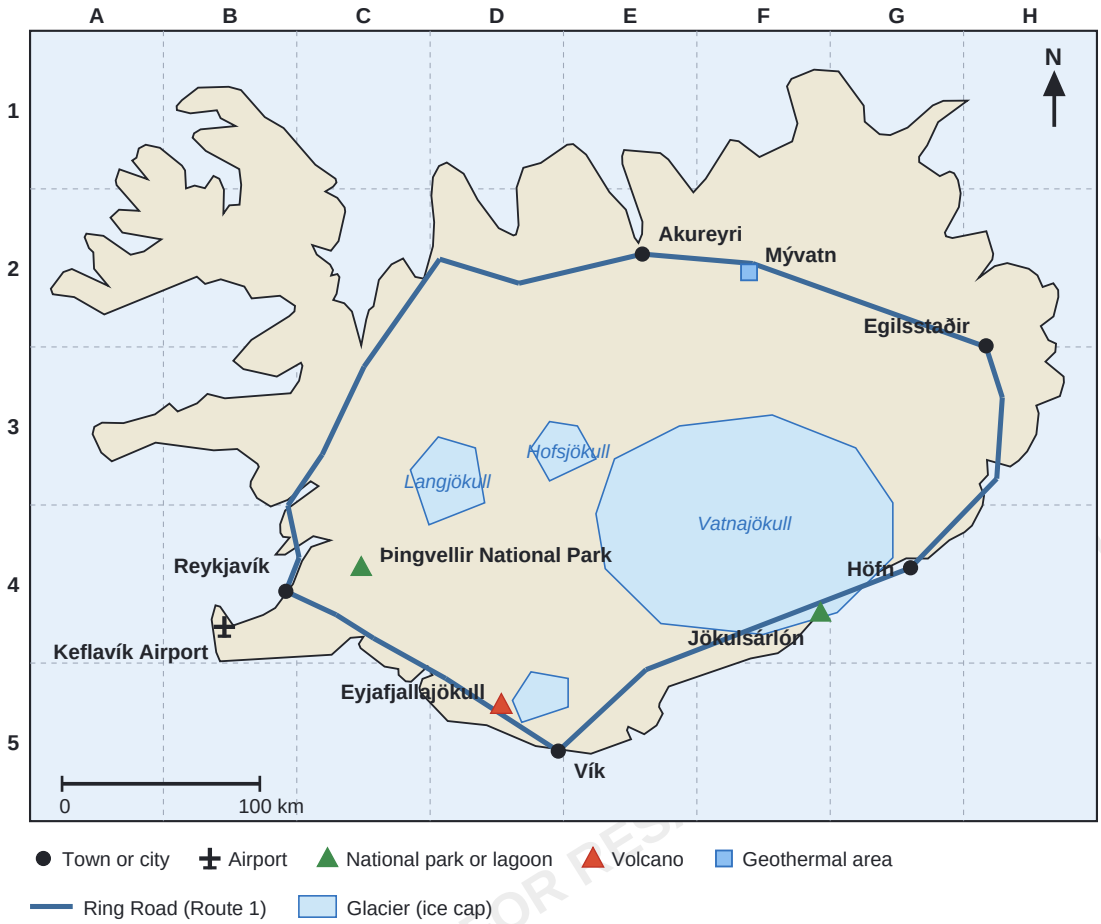
Iceland is an island country in the North Atlantic Ocean. It lies between about 63°N and 66.5°N, just south of the Arctic Circle, with Greenland to the north-west and the British Isles and Norway to the south-east. Its area is about 103,000 km². Reykjavík, the capital, is on the south-west coast.



Resource A: Iceland in the North Atlantic (sketch map)

Source: Geography of Iceland (Wikipedia). Coastlines: Natural Earth 1:50m (public domain), simplified by TPH.

Resource B: Features of Iceland



Resource B: Map of Iceland (sketch map; grid squares A to H across and 1 to 5 down)

Source: TPH sketch map. Coastline: Natural Earth 1:50m (public domain), simplified. Positions of features and the outlines of the ice caps and the Ring Road are approximate.

Resource C: The natural environment

Iceland sits on the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, where the North American and Eurasian tectonic plates are pulling apart. The island has hundreds of volcanoes, with approximately 30 active volcanic systems.

Around 10.2% of the land is covered by glaciers (2014), but they are retreating at an accelerating rate. Vatnajökull is the largest ice cap, with an area of 7,764 km².

The Highlands make up about half of the land area. This lava desert is mostly uninhabited. Only about 1.21% of the land is arable (2012). Most people live on the coast, particularly in the south-west.

Source: Geography of Iceland (Wikipedia), citing Loftmyndir ehf. (2014) for glacier cover and Carmichael (1964) for the volcanic systems.

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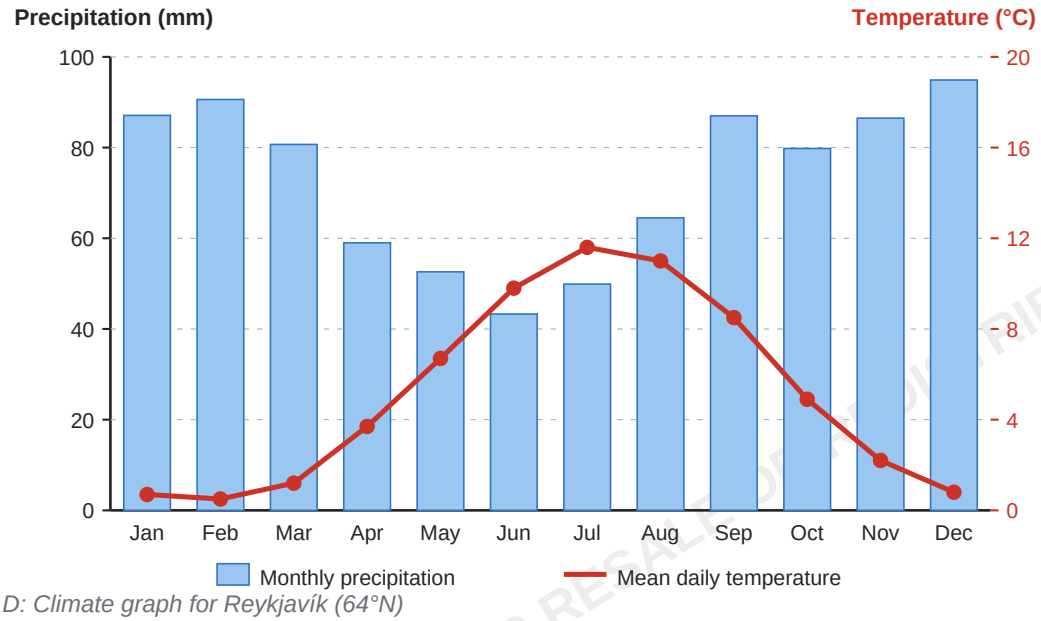
Resource D: Climate of Reykjavík (1991–2020 averages)

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year
Temp (°C)	0.7	0.5	1.2	3.7	6.7	9.8	11.6	11.0	8.5	4.9	2.2	0.8	5.1
Rain (mm)	87.1	90.6	80.7	59.0	52.6	43.3	49.9	64.5	87.0	79.8	86.5	94.9	875.9



Resource D: Climate graph for Reykjavík (64°N)

Source: Icelandic Meteorological Office, 1991–2020 normals for Reykjavík, as reported in Reykjavík (Wikipedia).

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Question One (35 marks)

(a) Using Resource B, complete the précis map below to show these features of Iceland:

- Keflavík Airport
- Þingvellir National Park
- Akureyri
- Vatnajökull ice cap
- the Ring Road (Route 1)

Include all mapping conventions (title, key and north arrow).

[6 marks]

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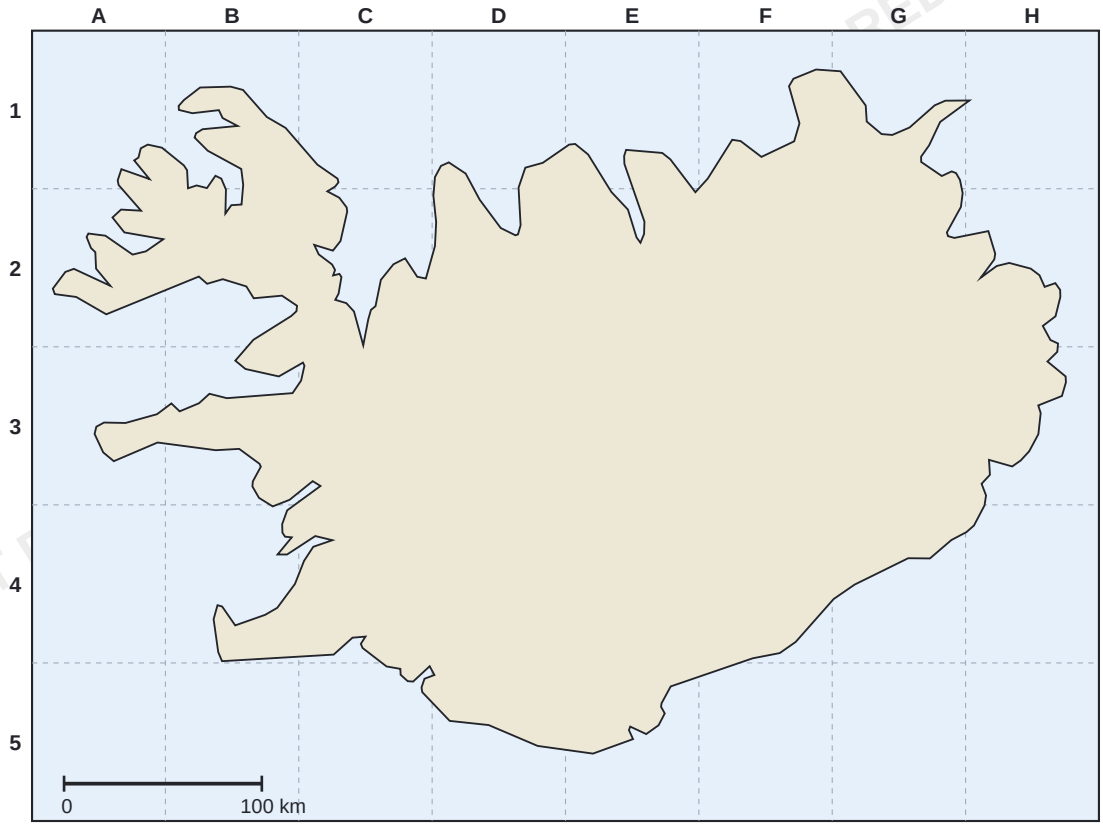

Title: _____

Key

(b) Use the climate graph and table in Resource D to describe, in detail, the pattern of temperature through the year in Reykjavík.

[2 marks]

(c) Give reasons for the pattern of temperature you described in part (b). Use Resources A and D.

[3 marks]

(d) Use Resource H to place these five events on the timeline below. Write the number of each event (1–5) on the timeline in the correct place, and give the timeline an accurate title.

1. The Ring Road is completed.
2. Meeks Field opens at Keflavík.
3. The civilian terminal at Keflavík is completed.
4. Eyjafjallajökull erupts.
5. Fagradalsfjall begins to erupt.

[3 marks]

Title: _____

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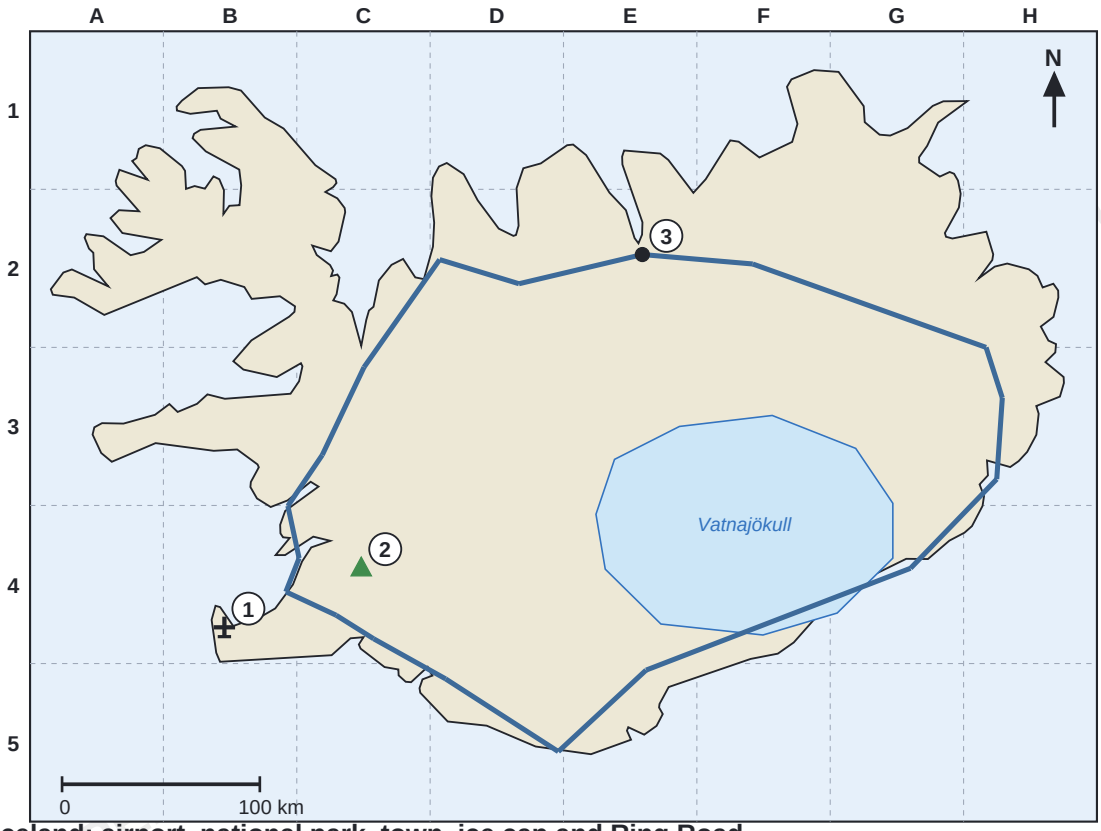
THE WORKED ANSWERS TO PARTS (a) TO (d)

Question 1 (35 marks) [Iceland]

(a) Using Resource B, complete the précis map below to show these features of Iceland: • Keflavík Airport • Þingvellir National Park • Akureyri • Vatnajökull ice cap • the Ring Road (Route 1) Include all mapping conventions (title, key and north arrow).



Title: Iceland: airport, national park, town, ice cap and Ring Road

Key	
±	1 Keflavík Airport
▲	2 Þingvellir National Park
●	3 Akureyri
▭	Vatnajökull ice cap
—	Ring Road (Route 1)

(a) Answer: Keflavík Airport in square B4, Þingvellir in C4, Akureyri in E2, Vatnajökull mainly in F4; the Ring Road drawn all the way round the coast; title, key and north arrow added.

• Use the grid on Resource B: find each feature's column letter and row number, then mark the same square on your map. Keflavík Airport is in B4 (the far south-west), Þingvellir National Park in C4 (inland, east of Reykjavík), Akureyri in E2 (the north coast) and Vatnajökull in F4 (the south-east of the interior).

• Draw the Ring Road as one line that goes round the island through the main towns of Resource B,

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passing along the south coast, the east, the north and back through the west; it does not cross the middle of the Highlands.

• Add the conventions: a title that says what and where (e.g. Iceland: airport, national park, town, ice cap and Ring Road), a key with a symbol for each feature, and a north arrow. Use colour for the ice cap and the road, and pen for the labels.

• Marking (TPH): 1 mark for each of the five features placed in the correct square or along the correct route (5), and 1 mark for a title, key and north arrow all present (1). A merit-level précis map locates every feature accurately; an excellence one is also complete and clear.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Read grid references column first, then row, and always add a title, key and north arrow.

(b) Use the climate graph and table in Resource D to describe, in detail, the pattern of temperature through the year in Reykjavík.

(b) Answer: Temperature is lowest in Feb (0.5°C) and highest in Jul (11.6°C), a range of only 11.1°C, and never falls below zero on average.

• Achievement: describes the pattern with some data, e.g. temperatures are lowest in winter (Feb 0.5°C) and highest in summer (Jul 11.6°C).

• Merit/Excellence: uses the data precisely and adds a comparison, e.g. the annual range is only 11.1°C (11.6 − 0.5), all twelve months are above 0°C, and the warmest month (11.6°C) is still cool; temperatures rise steadily from Feb to Jul (about 11.1°C in 5 months) and fall again to Dec (0.8°C).

• Quote values with their units and name the months; a description that only says ‘it gets warmer in summer’ stays at Achievement.

KEY TAKEAWAY

A detailed description quotes the highest and lowest values, the range and the shape of the pattern.

(c) Give reasons for the pattern of temperature you described in part (b). Use Resources A and D.

(c) Answer: Reykjavík is at 64°N, so the Sun is low and winter days are very short, which keeps temperatures low; but the warm North Atlantic Drift keeps the coast mild, so winters are not as cold as at other places at this latitude.

• Reason 1, latitude: Reykjavík is at about 64°N (Resource A), close to the Arctic Circle. In winter the Sun is low in the sky and days are very short, so little heat arrives and temperatures fall to 0.5°C in Feb; in summer the days are long but the Sun is still low, so even July is only 11.6°C.

• Reason 2, ocean: the island is surrounded by the North Atlantic. A branch of the warm North Atlantic Drift flows past the south and west coasts, and the sea loses heat slowly, so the winter temperature stays near or above 0°C and the range is small (11.1°C) compared with a place inland at the same latitude.

• Marking (TPH): 1 mark for each valid reason (maximum 2) and 1 mark for linking a reason to the data in Resource D.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Explain a temperature pattern with latitude (Sun angle and day length) and the effect of the ocean.

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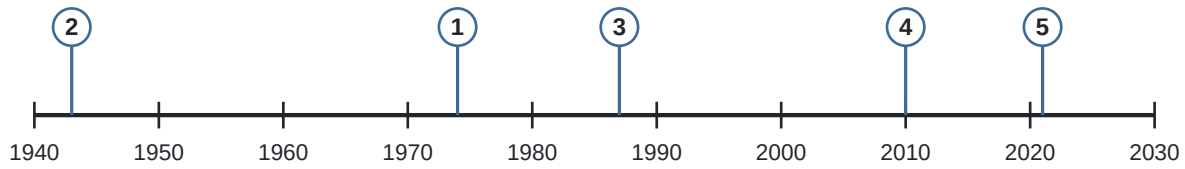
(d) Use Resource H to place these five events on the timeline below. Write the number of each event (1–5) on the timeline in the correct place, and give the timeline an accurate title. 1. The Ring Road is completed. 2. Meeks Field opens at Keflavík. 3. The civilian terminal at Keflavík is completed. 4. Eyjafjallajökull erupts. 5. Fagradalsfjall begins to erupt.



Title: Key events in Iceland's development, 1943 to 2021

(d) Answer: Event 2 at 1943, event 1 at 1974, event 3 at 1987, event 4 at 2010 and event 5 at 2021; title e.g. 'Key events in Iceland's development, 1943 to 2021'.

- Find each date in Resource H: Meeks Field 1943 (event 2), the Ring Road 1974 (event 1), the civilian terminal 1987 (event 3), Eyjafjallajökull 2010 (event 4), Fagradalsfjall 2021 (event 5).
- Place each number at the right point on the scale: the timeline is in equal 10-year steps, so 1943 sits just after the 1940 mark, 1974 is four-tenths of the way from 1970 to 1980, 1987 is seven-tenths of the way from 1980 to 1990, and 2010 is exactly on a tick.
- Marking (TPH): 2 marks if all five numbers are placed correctly (1 mark for three or four), plus 1 mark for an accurate title that includes the place and the time span.

KEY TAKEAWAY

On a timeline, space events to the scale and give a title that names the place and the dates.

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