

GEOGRAPHY

Foreword

This examination report seeks to provide teachers of 2/3 Unit (Common) and 3 Unit Geography with extensive comments about both the 1996 Geography examination and the marking operations. It is hoped that these comments will enable teachers who are preparing candidates for examination in this subject to be better informed about the following:

- the manner in which the Higher School Certificate Examination is developed
- the general marking guide used in the examination marking operations
- the examination marking operation and maintenance of marking standards
- sections of the Syllabus from which questions are drawn
- content and organisation of responses to particular questions from a better candidate and from a weaker candidate
- areas of the Syllabus which are not well interpreted.

This report acknowledges the excellent work undertaken by teachers of Geography in the preparation of candidates for the inaugural examination of the Stage 6 Geography 2/3 Unit (Common) and 3 Unit Syllabus. It also endeavours to reassure teachers that candidates in this subject are appropriately rewarded in the examination process.

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Marking Procedures and Operations

Selection of Markers

Markers are selected according to a set of criteria laid down by the Board of Studies in consultation with the relevant unions. Included in this criteria are:

- recent experience in teaching the Syllabus to Year 12
- years of experience in teaching Geography
- academic qualifications
- previous marking experience.

Markers nominate on their applications the Options at 2/3 Unit (Common) and 3 Unit levels that have been previously taught. This is considered when markers are allocated to appropriate marking teams.

In addition, there are Senior Markers whose principal duties are to:

- lead and co-ordinate a group of markers
- organise the briefing sessions
- not only set marking criteria in consultation with the markers, but also maintain reliability of marking
- maintain a close watch on discrepancies in marking and act promptly to resolve them.

The purpose of the marking operation is to rank each candidate's response to each question or part thereof in accordance with the criteria laid down in the mark scales. See **Table 1 : Generalised Marking Guide**, page 3.

Double Marking

All questions requiring a written response in 2/3 Unit (Common) and 3 Unit are double marked, an approach which assumes that each marker provides a reliable judgment. The second marker is NOT aware of the mark provided by the first marker.

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Discrepancies

Discrepancies between the two marks awarded occur.

- in cases where a single mark is awarded for a question (e.g. extended response), the difference between the two marks awarded is equal to or greater than one-third of the range of marks allocated to the question;
- wherever the final mark awarded for the question comprises marks awarded to a number of parts, the difference between the two marks awarded for the whole question is equal to or greater than one quarter of the range of marks allocated to the question.

Discrepancies between the two marks awarded are brought to the attention of the Senior Marker, who then awards a third mark without prior knowledge of the former marks. The three marks are then assessed so that the two marks which will finally be awarded can be determined. In most cases it will be the average of the three marks which is awarded twice.

Generalised Marking Guide

All ranking of scripts by both markers is in accordance with the criteria laid down in the Generalised Marking Guide established for Section I, Part B and Section II (extended response to Options).

Table 1 : Generalised Marking Guide

Rank	Mark	Guidelines	Criteria for specific question
A	20 19 18 17	Excellent Clear reasoning, explicit. Scholarly argument. Evidence of a variety of data sources. Illustrative examples to support argument	
B	16 15 14 13	Above average Consistent and explanatory. Factually correct. Attempt made to justify generalisations.	
C	12 11 10 9 8	Average Somewhat descriptive but relevant to the question. Some use of factual data. Conclusion consistent with argument presented.	

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Rank	Mark	Guidelines	Criteria for specific question
D	7	Below Average Little use of factual data to support generalisations. Conclusions inconsistent with data or argument or no conclusions given.	
	6		
	5		
	4		
E	3	Poor Absence of factual data. Much irrelevant material. Incoherent or incomprehensible.	
	2		
	1		
	0	Check with senior marker and Examination Committee.	

Table 1 : Sample of a Generalised Marking Guide

These Generalised Marking Guides are developed by Senior Markers and Markers after the reading of candidates' responses, the former having been briefed, prior to development of the Generalised Marking Guides, by members of the Examination Committee on the Syllabus Outcomes and Content examined in each of the questions. Whilst different Generalised Marking Guides are established for different kinds of questions, they are framed with the intention of achieving comparable standards across such questions. **Table 2** (page 5) provides the final mean out of 25 and standard deviation of each of the extended response questions in 2/3 Unit (Common), Section II, and shows the comparability of questions both between Options and within Options.

Marker Reliability and Comparability

In allocating marks, markers place the performance of each candidate in its true relationship to that of other candidates. There is no predetermined *pass standard*. Markers are expected to mark to a mean of 10/20 for the extended responses (these marks are later scaled to a mark out of 25) and spread marks over the whole range in accordance with the Generalised Marking Guide. The Marker Reliability Operation at the Marking Centre has two important roles:

1. It assists Supervisors of Marking (SOM) and the Senior Markers (SMs) to establish an appropriate Generalised Marking Guide for each question during the Pilot Marking Operation. After a Generalised Marking Guide has been developed, as a result of discussions and reading of sample scripts, the markers begin pilot marking. During this time the initial Generalised Marking Guide is applied and the marks awarded are recorded on tally cards. Statistical reports are produced from this operation and these assist the SOM and SM to ascertain whether the Generalised Marking Guide provides an acceptable distribution of marks and mean for each question. Once the Generalised Marking Guide is finalised and the actual marking operation begins, the statistical

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reports enable the SOM and SM to check that the distribution of marks established during the Pilot Marking operation is being maintained.

2. In order to ensure that the marking scale for each question is being applied consistently by each marker, it is essential that feedback is provided to the SOM and SMs on the marking patterns of their markers since it is very difficult for markers to maintain consistent marking standards throughout the whole operation, despite a conscientious effort to do so. An atypical centre can distort a marker's judgment about what constitutes a good or a poor response. Through its ability to monitor the marking patterns of individual markers, SM groups and the entire marking centre, the Marker Reliability Operation can provide information which assists not only in the development of appropriate Generalised Marking Guides but also in their accurate and consistent application.

Table 2 : Comparability of questions within and between Options

Question Number	Number of candidates	Mean (out of 25 marks)	Standard Deviation
18	4767	13.54	4.86
19	1848	12.94	4.39
20	2525	12.10	5.01
21	4977	13.31	4.90
22	4203	12.85	4.81
23	3110	12.78	4.98
24	2125	12.86	5.69
25	3146	13.36	4.71
		Mean = 12.97	

Table 2 : Comparability of questions within and between Options

3. *Evaluation*

Prior to the end of the marking operation, SMs and Markers are asked to comment on the degree of competence with which candidates handled specific questions. Comments are also sought which can assist teachers in the preparation of students for the examination. These comments are for the Examination Report. Constructive criticism of individual questions and the paper generally is also requested for the attention of the Examination Committee.

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Introduction to the 1996 Examination Papers

In 1996, 9067 candidates presented for the Stage 6 Geography 2/3 Unit (Common) paper. This was 1113 fewer than the candidature of 1995. 2771 candidates presented for the 3 Unit (Additional) paper, representing 568 fewer than in previous years. A further 102 candidates presented for the Geography 2/3 Unit Repeat paper, with two candidates sitting for the 3 Unit (Additional) Repeat paper.

The Stage 6 Geography 2/3 Unit (Common) and 3 Unit (Additional) papers were the first in which the revised Syllabuses introduced in 1995 were examined. The 2/3 Unit (Common) paper consisted of a revised examination format comprising:

- **Section I** (25 marks)
 - **Part A** (15 marks) multiple-choice based on skills
 - **Part B** (10 marks) short-answer questions based on skills
- **Section II** (75 marks)
 - choice of three out of four Options, from each of which one question is to be attempted
 - each Option to consist of two questions, one of which is to be structured and based on the Broadsheet
- **Broadsheet** in which a page is dedicated to stimulus material related to a specific Option. It should be noted that, because the Broadsheet was common to both the examination papers based on the new Syllabus, and those on the old Syllabus for Repeat candidates in order to accommodate the Repeat papers, water and energy stimulus material was used on the 1996 Broadsheet for the Option : Natural Resources.

The 2/3 Unit (Common) paper and the 3 Unit (Additional) papers were, on the whole, well received, with candidates being given the opportunity to demonstrate their command of the discipline; the stimulating nature of the Broadsheet was greatly appreciated. The performance of candidates in these papers was generally sound, indicating that the majority of students were effectively prepared for this examination.

The following points need to be emphasised:

1. the Generalised Marking Guide used this year was comparable across all questions;
2. the mark value of the structured questions should be used as an indicator of the amount of time and space to be allocated for each part;

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3. the structured questions are marked out of 20 and then scaled to 25 marks. Allocation of marks to each part of the question is indicative of relative weighting and is reflected in the mark for the whole question;
4. candidates of lesser ability, or who were not as well prepared, experienced great difficulty in responding to the structured questions in each of the Section II Options;
5. some candidates appeared to be uncertain about what constitutes sample studies as specified in the Syllabus document;
6. the distinction between natural resource management and environmental management of fragile ecosystems also caused uncertainty;
7. it is pointed out that case studies used for the former Syllabus are not readily adaptable to the revised Syllabus;
8. irrespective of the examination question, some candidates produced a prepared answer to an anticipated question;
9. a number of 3 Unit scripts were outstanding and a tribute to the candidates and their preparation.

The 1996 Examination Committee

Each year the Board invites expressions of interest for membership of the Geography Examination Committee. The Board, after consultation with the Chair of the Syllabus Advisory Committee, selects applicants for membership of the Examination Committee which normally consists of six members, four being practising teachers who were not teaching Year 12 and two University academics.

Twelve days of meetings took place between January and July to develop the examination papers and associated broadsheet.

All papers and broadsheet stimulus material underwent several drafts and editorial changes prior to a final version. Questions were developed, bearing in mind the fact that:

- (i) Syllabus Outcomes must be examined together with geographic skills, fieldwork and contemporary issues
- (ii) language must be clear and unambiguous
- (iii) questions must be commensurate with the time-frame and the examination conditions

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Other responsibilities of the Examination Committee:

- (i) nomination of Assessors for each of the papers from the expressions of interest forwarded by experienced teachers not teaching Year 12 in 1996
- (ii) nomination of the Supervisor of Marking from those expressions of interest forwarded
- (iii) briefing of Senior Markers concerning the examination questions, sections of the Syllabus from which they are drawn, and the Syllabus Outcomes examined
- (iv) members of the Examination Committee reviewed all Generalised Marking Guides to be used in the examination. These were finalised in consultation with Senior Markers, the Supervisor of Marking and the Examination Committee Chairperson
- (v) via the Chairperson, feedback from the Marking Centre was collected and collated for inclusion in this report and for the benefit of the 1997 Examination Committee
- (vi) compilation of an examination report by the Chairperson for public distribution
- (vii) meeting of SOM and Chairperson with the BOS Consultative Committee to determine the final distribution of marks in Geography.

Analysis of the 1996 Geography 2/3 Unit Common Paper

Section I : Part A

Questions 1 to 15 (1 mark each)

For each question in Part A, reference is made to the Syllabus Objective/s and Outcome/s, the referred stimulus material and the question rationale (skills tested).

Table 3 : Geography Examination 2/3 Unit Common Section I Part A

Part A Question Number	Syllabus Objective/s and page reference	Outcome/s	Subject Matter	Syllabus Objective/s and page reference
1	P27 Ability to investigate	1(c) Read, interpret and analyse graphs including bar graphs	Bar graph "Use of Water"	Test graphic interpretation skills
2	P27 Ability to investigate	1(b) Read, interpret and analyse maps (metric and imperial) including choropleth maps	Water Availability Map	Test map interpretation skills

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Part A Question Number	Syllabus Objective/s and page reference	Outcome/s	Subject Matter	Syllabus Objective/s and page reference
3	P27 Ability to investigate	1(c) Read, interpret and analyse graphs including pie graphs 1(d) make qualitative and quantitative analysis of statistical information presented in a variety of forms including graphs	Energy Consumption Pie Graph	Test graphical interpretation and quantitative statistical interpretation skills
4	P27 Ability to investigate	1(b) Read, interpret and analyse maps (metric and imperial) including choropleth maps	Renewable Energy Resources Map	Test map interpretation skills
5	P27 Ability to investigate	1(b) Read, interpret and analyse maps (metric and imperial) including topographic maps	Grand Canyon National Park Map	Test topographic map interpretation skills - point references, slope and aspect
6	P27 Ability to investigate	1(b) Read, interpret and analyse maps (metric and imperial) including topographic maps	Grand Canyon National Park Map	Test topographic map interpretation skills - point co-ordinates, latitude and longitude
7	P27 Ability to investigate	1(b) Read, interpret and analyse maps (metric and imperial) including topographic maps	Grand Canyon National Park Map	Test topographic map interpretation skills - point co-ordinates, scale
8	P27 Ability to investigate	1(b) Read, interpret and analyse maps (metric and imperial) including topographic maps	Grand Canyon National Park Map	Test topographic map interpretation skills - point co-ordinates, bearing
9	P27 Ability to investigate	1(b) Read, interpret and analyse maps (metric and imperial) including topographic maps	Map of Darlington, UK	Test topographic map interpretation skills - quadrants
10	P27 Ability to investigate	1(b) Read, interpret and analyse maps (metric and imperial) including topographic maps	Map of Darlington, UK	Test topographic map interpretation skills - recognition of patterns
11	P27 Ability to investigate	1(b) Read, interpret and analyse maps (metric and imperial) including topographic maps. 1(d) make qualitative and quantitative analysis of statistical information presented in a variety of forms including maps	Map of Darlington, UK	Test topographic map interpretation skills - point co-ordinates, legend interpretation, quantitative analysis
12	P27 Ability to investigate	1(b) Read, interpret and analyse maps (metric and imperial) including topographic maps	Map of Darlington, UK	Test topographic map interpretation skills - point co-ordinates, legend interpretation

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Part A Question Number	Syllabus Objective/s and page reference	Outcome/s	Subject Matter	Syllabus Objective/s and page reference
14	P27 Ability to investigate	1(c) Read, interpret and analyse graphs including ternary graphs	Percentage distribution of Gross Domestic Product by Sectors	Test ability to interpret ternary graph
15	P27 Ability to investigate	1(e) Interpret and analyse photographs and remote-sensed imagery including ground level and oblique photographs	Photographs of Productive Activity	Test interpretation of ground level, oblique photographs

A table showing candidate performance across all questions is provided. Markers were asked to provide correct responses to Section 1, Part A, as a quality control measure prior to the forwarding of correct responses for machine-marking.

Table 4 : Candidate performance in Section 1 Part A Questions 1 to 15 multiple-choice

Question Number	Correct Response to Multiple Choice Questions 1-15	Percentage of candidature selecting correct response
1	C	78.30
2	D	84.59
3	B	86.57
4	A	99.10
5	D	41.30
6	C	87.32
7	A	86.85
8	A	77.64
9	C	79.66
10	D	68.66
11	B	52.53
12	C	88.86

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Question Number	Correct Response to Multiple Choice Questions 1-15	Percentage of candidature selecting correct response
13	D	33.80
14	A	74.16
15	C	66.15

The mean was 11.05 and standard deviation 2.210

Comments

General

The mean of 11.05 out of 15 was too high, given the mean of 10/20 required for the extended response component of the examination. The standard deviation of 2.210 indicates a clustering of candidates' scores relative to the standard deviation ideal of 4 for the extended essay component. Efforts will be made to rectify this in 1997.

Candidates appeared to have a sound knowledge not only of graphical interpretation skills, but also of map reading skills including point and area references, latitude and longitude and scale.

Specific

The questions least well addressed were the following:

- Question 5 requiring the aspect of a slope.

Here 30.26% of candidates chose *SW* as opposed to *NE*.

- Question 11 requiring the approximate percentage of the built-up area.

Here 24.81% of candidates selected 66% as opposed to 43%. The disused railway cutting was taken to constitute the built-up area. If this is excluded, the nearest correct answer is 43%.

- Question 13 requiring identification of the photograph with the smallest scale.

Here 33.88% of candidates selected the larger scale photograph, suggesting that many had difficulty in differentiating between large and small scale when applied beyond a topographic map.

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- Question 15 requiring differentiation between vertical, satellite, oblique and ground level photography.

Here 26.72% of candidates selected *vertical* as opposed to *oblique*.

Table 5 : Section I, Part B, Questions 16 and 17 (5 marks each)

Part B Question number	Syllabus Objective/s and page reference	Outcome/s	Subject Matter	Rationale
16(a)-(d)	P27 Ability to investigate	1(b) Read, interpret and analyse maps including weather maps 1(e) Interpret and analyse photographs and remote-sensed imagery including satellite imagery	Synoptic chart and satellite photograph	Test ability to interpret synoptic chart and satellite photography
17	P27 Ability to investigate P28 Ability to communicate P29 Attitudes and values 1. demonstration of interest in and concern for environments on a variety of scales 2. demonstration of a commitment to social justice	1(b) Read, interpret and analyse maps (metric and imperial) including topographic maps 1(f) Undertake geographic research including fieldwork and analysis of data 2(c) Communicate the inquiry sequence and findings of research including fieldwork	Grand Canyon National Park, United States of America/ Darlington, UK	Test ability to 1. identify a contemporary geographic issue; 2. outline a sequential fieldwork methodology

For each question in Part B, reference is made to the Syllabus Objectives and Outcomes, the referred stimulus material and the question rationale referring to specific skills tested.

Question 16 (a-d)

General Comments

There was some ambiguity in part (a) which required a season to be specified although a cyclone could occur at any time from October to May. As a consequence a range of responses (Summer, Autumn, the Wet) were accepted. The least well understood component appeared to be part (d) requiring the weather that would be experienced in Perth within the next twenty-four hours. It was difficult to allocate two marks for identification of changes over a range of weather variables. Further, it was possible that the cold front might not actually pass through Perth. Consequently, discrepancies were high in this question.

Candidates appeared to have a sound knowledge of graphical interpretation skills and map reading skills including point and area references, latitude and longitude and scale.

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Students should note the following points:

- more practice of synoptic chart and satellite photograph interpretation is required;
- the correct units of measurement should be emphasised;
- answers should be kept simple;
- a two-mark question does not necessarily require only two pieces of relevant information.

Better responses

Here students could:

- clearly identify the season
- recognise the units and state the correct barometric pressure at Alice Springs
- interpret barometric pressure difference in order to identify the nature of the pressure system
- identify the movement of the cold front and associated change in weather conditions, viz. decrease in temperature, increase in humidity, increase in cloud cover, increase of intensity of wind and possibility of rain
- refer to both the synoptic chart and the satellite photograph.

Weaker responses:

Students here:

- failed to recognise the low over Central Australia and the presence of a cyclone as being indicative of the summer/autumn weather pattern
- could not interpret units on isobars and/or failed to indicate correct units
- could not understand the term *pressure system*
- could not comprehend the change of weather over time and/or the effects of the passage of the cold front.

Question 17

General Comments

The question provided students with an opportunity to demonstrate their grasp of fieldwork and topographic map interpretation skills, as well as contemporary issues. It was a good discriminator and attracted a wide variety of responses.

The following points should be noted:

- students should be aware of the Syllabus preamble concerning fieldwork
- the Senior Geography Project should cover a specific rather than a broad issue
- students must read instructions carefully
- as well as encompassing a range of activities, fieldwork should encourage students to think about methodology/methodologies which could be used to acquire the necessary information
- fieldwork must be related to contemporary issues
- students must clearly distinguish between geographic concepts and geographic issues.

Specific Comments

The better candidates were able to:

- understand the term *geographic issue*
- identify an explicit issue from one of the topographic maps and refer to features by using point and area references
- establish a sequence of fieldwork methodology to investigate a specific issue
- indicate *why* and *how* collected data would assist in investigation of the issue
- recognise clearly the difference between primary and secondary data sources
- link responses to their own fieldwork studies.

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Weaker students:

- did not identify a geographic issue but broadly referred to the Grand Canyon National Park
- made little or no reference to the map
- described problems but did not refer to specific fieldwork methods for investigating them
- ignored the instruction to refer to the Broadsheet or referred to the synoptic chart and satellite photograph
- rehashed their student Senior Geography Project.

Section II : Options

Candidate frequency of response to Questions 18-25

The following table is indicative of candidate selection of questions within and between the four Options.

Table 6 showing Frequency of Option and Question Selection

Options	Question Number	Percentage of total responses	Percentage choice of Option
Natural Resources	*18	17.85	24.77
	19	6.92	
Fragile Ecosystems	*20	9.46	28.08
	21	18.63	
Large Cities	*22	15.74	27.39
	23	11.65	

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Options	Question Number	Percentage of total responses	Percentage choice of Option
Productive Activity	*24	7.96	19.74
	25	11.78	

* Indicates structured question

The table shows a relatively even distribution of the Options chosen by candidates, with a definite preference for the structured question rather than the unstructured.

Two points need to be made concerning the structured questions within each of the Options:

- The structured questions in the 1996 examination followed the specifications indicated in the Examination Specifications for Geography (B.O.S.) for extended responses. Candidates were provided with directions for reference to a specific area of the Broadsheet, a topic for extended response and a series of structured questions directing the nature and content of the response. For example, refer to Question 24, *'Using the Model of Productive Activity shown on page 4 of the Broadsheet and your knowledge of Productive Activity, write an extended response on:*

A Productive Activity on a Global Scale

In your response:

- name a productive activity and describe its global pattern*
 - describe and account for the factors that affect the location of this productive activity*
 - discuss the changing nature of this productive activity.'*
- Almost all candidates, particularly those of lesser ability, experienced difficulty in coping with structured questions which required interpretation of stimulus material and the application and synthesis of this material in a geographic context under examination conditions. The relativity between the structured and unstructured questions is a concern. This is, however, accounted for in the marking operation as can be seen by reference to Table 2.

Option 1 : Natural Resources

Question 18

Using the Renewable Energy Resources map on page 1 of the Broadsheet and your knowledge of Natural Resources, write an extended response on:

The Use of Natural Resources

In your response:

- | | | |
|-----|--|----|
| (a) | explain the terms renewable , recyclable and exhaustible resources; | 6 |
| (b) | compare the production of renewable energy resources in Africa and North America; | 5 |
| (c) | using sample studies of a variety of natural resources, analyse the issues related to their use. | 14 |

Relationship to the Syllabus document

Reference to Syllabus document pp 36-37

1. Statements examined:

- the implications of the uneven distribution of natural resources
- environmental, social, political, economic and technological issues arising from resource utilisation
- sample studies and active inquiry methodologies.

2. Topic Outcomes examined:

- recognition of the fact that natural resources are distributed unevenly over space and time
- an understanding of resources including their renewable, recyclable or exhaustive nature and their use within particular contexts
- analysis of environmental, social, political, economic and technological issues related to use of natural resources at different scales and times
- use of active inquiry methods and sample studies.

3. Subject matter examined:

1. Nature of natural resources - renewable, recyclable and exhaustible

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2. Patterns of natural resources:

- uneven global distribution (production)
- patterns of economic and political control over the distribution of natural resources and the impacts of such controls on production and consumption

3. Issues related to the use of natural resources:

- environmental, social, political, economic and technological issues in reference to sample studies

4. Directive terms:

Explain, compare and analyse.

Better responses

In these, candidates:

- (a) • explained the concept of natural resources
- differentiated between the different types of resources, giving supporting examples
- used the term *sustainability* in describing resource use
- (b) • referred concisely to stimulus material and compared production of renewable energy resources in Africa and North America
- accounted for any differences in the context of economic and biophysical factors
- (c) • analysed a variety of issues, e.g. political, technological, social, economic, environmental
- supported their discussions with a variety of sample studies

Weaker responses

In these, candidates:

- were unable to differentiate clearly between different types of resources
- failed to refer satisfactorily to stimulus material and misinterpreted or ignored statistics

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- misunderstood the term *issues* in relation to resource use and, instead, listed problems of resource use
- used inappropriate sample studies that were often drawn from fragile ecosystems.

General Comments

Students

- must understand the nature of renewable, recyclable and exhaustible resources and be able to illustrate these concepts with examples.
- must practise interpreting information from a broadsheet to justify and/or substantiate assertions
- must practise interpreting directive terms, e.g. *explain, describe, analyse*
- must be able to differentiate between problems of resource use and issues associated with the use of resources
- must focus on sample studies on a variety of scales.

There was a tendency to use isolated case studies of natural resource locations, e.g. Ok Tedi, Amazonia, rather than to focus on integrated sample studies of natural resources. The intent of the Syllabus is to study an example of each type of natural resource on a variety of scales - local, national, regional and global - and over a period of time which would cover patterns, issues relating to use and strategies of resource management.

Question 19

With reference to a variety of sample studies, discuss the natural resource management strategies adopted by government and non-government organisations.

Relationship to the Syllabus document

1. Statements examined:

- the topic explores strategies for natural resource management
- sample studies of natural resources.

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2. **Topic Outcomes examined:**

- an understanding of different strategies of resource management.

3. **Subject matter examined:**

- Strategies adopted by government and non-government organisations, political or economic blocs, trans-national corporations and business entities on a variety of scales.

4. **Directive terms:**

- demonstrate, analyse.

Better responses

In these, candidates:

- used a variety of sample studies
- delineated a range of strategies used by government and non-government organisations
- through sample studies illustrated their clear understanding of the need for resource management, focussing on specific management strategies and well-informed discussion of strategies
- evaluated the effectiveness of the strategies
- supported statements with facts and figures.

Weaker responses

In these, candidates:

- discussed problems caused by mismanagement of a resource rather than strategies
- gave sample studies more appropriate to fragile ecosystems, showing little ability to identify the resource use in such a study
- gave descriptions based on vague knowledge but not on relevant sample studies
- referred to only one case study

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- presented prepared answers on water and energy more appropriate to the past Syllabus, discussing use and misuse of resources rather than management strategies

General Comments

- Candidates appeared to be confused by the difference between sample studies of natural resources and fragile ecosystems. For example, discussion of differences between timber as a natural resource or a rainforest as a fragile ecosystem must be clearly indicated. There is some tendency by students to answer both the natural resource question and the fragile ecosystems question by using the same sample studies.
- The revised Syllabus and its Outcomes must be followed.
- The best sample studies covered a range of scales and resources and were current. Some students seemed to be studying the old case studies rather than sample studies.
- Some responses were very long (8 pages) and, as a result, students might have penalised themselves in other sections of the paper.
- The quality of responses relative to that in the former Syllabus for similar content was well above the previous norm.

Question 20

Using the stimulus material of the Grand Canyon on page 2 of the Broadsheet and your knowledge of Fragile Ecosystems, write an extended response on

Human Impact on Ecosystems

In your response:

- | | | |
|-----|---|----|
| (a) | <i>Identify an ecosystem and provide evidence from the stimulus material to support your answer;</i> | 3 |
| (b) | <i>describe how human activities have affected the ecosystem you have identified;</i> | 8 |
| (c) | <i>compare and contrast the impact of human activities on this ecosystem with another fragile ecosystem you have studied.</i> | 14 |

Relationship to the Syllabus document

Reference to Syllabus document pp 36-37

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1. **Statements examined:**

- ecosystems and their functioning
- vulnerability of ecosystems to human-induced change
- the nature and magnitude of human-induced change on fragile ecosystems
- sample studies of ecosystems.

2. **Topic Outcomes examined:**

- the human impact on ecosystems using a variety of secondary sources
- interpretation and analysis of topographic maps and photographs through extensive examination of appropriate information.

3. **Subject matter examined:**

- causes of ecosystem vulnerability
- sample studies of fragile ecosystems
- the ways in which, and the extent to which, people are able to control or disturb ecosystems
- the magnitude and rate of human-induced change causing stress to ecosystems.

4. **Directive terms:**

- investigate, identify, describe, compare and contrast.

Better responses

In these, candidates:

- understood the concept of ecosystems and could identify an ecosystem from the stimulus material
- used geographical terminology and ecosystem concepts to describe the impact of human activities on ecosystems with reference to the stimulus material

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- referred frequently to both the Grand Canyon and another fragile ecosystem for purposes of comparison and contrast
- used a conclusion to summarise their response to the question.

Weaker responses

In these, students

- failed to refer to the stimulus material and, instead, presented a prepared answer on an ecosystem
- failed to compare and/or contrast problems but, rather, listed some in a prepared case study
- tried to follow each part of the question but failed to recognise evidence and appropriate impacts from the Broadsheet.

General Comments

- Students need more practice in the skill of interpreting information from maps, photographs, tables and graphs.
- It is essential that candidates attempt to answer the question asked and, particularly, follow directives such as *provide evidence, refer to stimulus material, compare and contrast*.
- Prepared answers on ecosystems did not answer the question asked.

Of specific note:

This question was difficult as was reflected in its lower mean in relation to other questions.

Many chose to do this question as it was structured and, possibly, perceived it as being easier. It was, however, a difficult question for the less able student, since it required interpretation and application of information in the context of human impact to be derived from the stimulus material.

Question 21

"Management strategies at a variety of scales are required for the protection of fragile ecosystems".

Analyse this statement and illustrate your answer with sample studies.

Relationship to the Syllabus document

1. **Statements examined:**

- Ecosystems result from the interaction of the atmosphere, hydrosphere, lithosphere and biosphere
- The study of ecosystems derives from sample studies and active inquiry.

2. **Topic Outcomes examined:**

- Recognition of the need for responsible management strategies.
- Use of sample studies to evaluate management strategies at a variety of scales.

3. **Subject matter examined:**

- Management strategies for preserving and conserving fragile ecosystems at local, national, regional and global scales.
- Evaluation of management strategies.

4. **Directive terms:**

- Identification and analysis.

Better responses

In these, candidates:

- discussed, in depth, appropriate management strategies and applied them to an ecosystem
- clearly identified management strategies at each scale, with their assessment being based on accurate information

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- used integrated sample studies of one or more related ecosystems on a variety of scales (including fieldwork examples) to explain:
 - nature and causes of fragility
 - rationale for preservation or protection
 - management strategies applied on a variety of scales.
- showed a clear link between fragility, scale and sample studies.

Weaker responses

In these, students:

- described an ecosystem and associated pressures without giving details of management strategies
- did not clearly understand or address a variety of scales
- failed to understand the relationship between fragile ecosystems and specific management strategies
- focussed on problems and/or issues associated with one area or discussed global issues only
- discussed management issues at a variety of scales without linking them to specific sample studies
- confused ecosystems with natural resources.

General Comments

- Discussion of management strategies must be clearly linked to an ecosystem rather than based on generalisations or an issue. For example, World Wildlife Foundation where there is no clear mention of an ecosystem.
- Concepts which confused students:
 - reasons for the fragility of ecosystems
 - strategies and philosophies of management
 - scale (local, national, regional, continental, global).
- Students must answer all parts of the question.
- Integrated sample studies on a variety of scales assist students in their responses.
- Many students were confused about what constitutes a sample study.

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- Management for fragile ecosystems and those for natural resources must be clearly differentiated.

Of specific note:

When selecting samples an attempt should be made to indicate the link(s) between them on the basis of scale and integration of fragile ecosystems. For example, one sample study may consider alpine areas:

Kosciusko National Park	-	local scale
New Zealand Southern Alps	-	national scale
Himalayan Mountains	-	continental scale

to provide a continuum on a variety of scales which involve a range of human impacts and associated management strategies. Another sample study may involve coral reefs, with a focus on the Barrier Reef Marine Park. The issue of scale and integration could be achieved by studies of catchments draining to the reef and inter-tidal wetlands associated with the fluvial and marine environments. Isolated piecemeal sample studies which do not address scale and do not provide integration and continuity should be avoided.

Option 3 : Large Cities

Question 22

Using the stimulus material of Darlington on page 3 of the Broadsheet and your knowledge of Large Cities, write an extended response on:

The Role of Large Cities

In your response:

- | | | |
|-----|---|----|
| (a) | <i>name and locate your major study of ONE large city of at least two million people</i> | 2 |
| (b) | <i>describe the roles of the city of Darlington</i> | 7 |
| (c) | <i>compare and contrast the roles of the large city you have studied with the roles of the city of Darlington</i> | 16 |

Relationship to the Syllabus document

Reference to Syllabus document pp 34-35

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1. **Statements examined:**

- A major study of a large city of at least two million people.

2. **Topic Outcomes examined:**

- Explanation of how large cities reflect differences in population, economy, culture and society.
- Description of changes in urban processes over time and space
- Analysis of relationships between urban processes.

3. **Subject matter examined:**

- Role of large cities as centres of population, consumption, exchange, finance and corporate as well as political decision-making.

4. **Directive terms:**

- Name and locate, describe, compare and contrast.

Better responses

In these, candidates:

- named and located specifically and accurately a city of more than two million people.
- identified the key roles of Darlington by referring to the stimulus material
- referred to the scale of Darlington, and distinguished between the relative importance of a small regional centre and a large city
- compared and contrasted well, using scale, relative differences in role (corporate headquarters, decision-making, financial, number of commercial centres and transport network)
- referred to geographic terms *core city*, *regional city* and *global city* in context
- clearly discussed points of comparison or contrast.

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Weaker responses

Here, candidates:

- failed to give indication of the location of the major study
- assumed that Darlington was a global city and proceeded to make an erroneous comparison based on this assumption
- did not discuss the roles of a large city but digressed to environmental, political and social issues, comparison of these with Darlington being based solely on the use of photographs
- listed the roles of Darlington as shown on the Broadsheet but were unable to interpret and apply the analysis to their major study.
- Those who used *Sydopolis* as a case study had little idea of the concept, were obviously unable to discuss roles and presented a poorly understood case study.

General Comments

- The scale concept must be reinforced when students are referred to topographic maps or other stimulus material.
- Response to and use of stimulus material is obligatory if the question so directs.
- Reference to latitude and longitude must be made to establish location.
- Features or characteristics of an urban area and its roles or functions must be clarified.
- Students must practise comparing a major study of a large city with a range of cities from developed and under-developed countries on a variety of scales: primary, regional, global.
- *Sydopolis* should be avoided since it tends to confuse students. Sydney is a city of more than two million people, Wollongong and Newcastle are not.

Question 23

Describe and account for the changing patterns of world urbanisation.

Relationship to the Syllabus document

Reference to Syllabus document pp 34-35

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1. **Statements examined:**

- Examination of large cities in the context of world urbanisation.

2. **Topic Outcomes examined:**

- Description and analysis of patterns of urbanisation.

3. **Subject matter examined:**

- Changes over time in the rate and direction of urbanisation; rapid urban and suburban expansion, counter-urbanisation, urban consolidation.
- Economic, social, cultural, political and environmental forces affecting the nature and rates of urbanisation at different times and in different places.

4. **Directive terms:**

- Describe and account for.

Better responses

In these, candidates:

- gave excellent descriptions of the pattern of world urbanisation, including reference to several examples with supporting statistics.
- categorised countries into groups according to their stage of development and urbanisation
- described and accounted for changes over space and time
- considered social, cultural, political, economic and technological factors, and explained in the context of *pull and push* influences for developed and less well developed countries
- used tables, diagrams and graphs to reinforce the concepts discussed.

Weaker responses

In these, candidates:

- related changing patterns to one or a few cities rather than considering global patterns
- made unsupported generalised statements

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- incorrectly used or confused terms
- confused the roles of cities with patterns of urbanisation

General Comments

- Students must understand changes that have occurred in patterns of urbanisation both spatially and temporally
- Students must clarify the forces providing the impetus for change, showing how they differ from time to time between and amongst nations, and giving examples to illustrate
- Students must clarify definitions of terms, giving examples to reinforce such definitions.

Option 4 : Productive Activity

Question 24

Using the Model of Productive Activity shown on page 4 of the Broadsheet and your knowledge of Productive Activity, write an extended response on:

A Productive Activity on a Global Scale

In your response:

- | | | |
|-----|--|----|
| (a) | <i>name a productive activity and describe its global pattern</i> | 3 |
| (b) | <i>describe and account for the factors that affect the location of this productive activity</i> | 10 |
| (c) | <i>discuss the changing nature of this productive activity</i> | 12 |

Relationship to the Syllabus document

Reference to Syllabus document pp 38-39

1. **Statements examined:**

- one productive activity from the agricultural, manufacturing or services sector.
- the biophysical, technological, social, economic, cultural and political factors affecting the nature and distribution of the productive activity.

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2. **Topic Outcomes examined:**

- the interaction between the nature of this activity and biophysical, technological, social, cultural, economic and political factors.
- patterns of and changes in the activity on a variety of scales.

3. **Subject matter examined:**

- a specific productive activity; global pattern; biophysical, technological, social, economic, cultural and political factors; relationship between production and consumption.

4. **Directive terms:**

- name, describe and account for, discuss.

Better responses

In these, candidates:

- clearly indicated the global extent of the specific productive activity, giving specific examples at a variety of scales
- gave a detailed account of the factors that affect the location of their chosen productive activity as well as comprehensive data and examples in support of their account
- discussed change and current trends in the productive activity, giving a wide range of examples.

Weaker responses

Here, candidates:

- ignored the global context
- mentioned factors from the Model of Productive Activity, but did not explain them
- submitted responses that were often a prepared case-study of a production unit rather than of a productive activity within a global context.

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General Comments

Students must:

- clearly distinguish between a *production unit* and a *productive activity*
- emphasise productive activity on a variety of scales
- productive activities should be chosen which have a global context; description of them needs to be more specific than merely saying *agriculture, manufacturing* or *services*
- refer to the Broadsheet where directed.

Of specific note:

1. This Option required the largest number of redirection of responses between Questions 24 and 25, resulting from students' either selecting a productive unit in answering Question 24 or selecting a productive activity for Question 25. The question which attracted the higher relative mark was taken for individual candidates.
2. The Syllabus specifies the choice of ONE productive activity from the agricultural, manufacturing or services sector. Selections beyond these parameters must not be made as students doing so could be disadvantaged in the examination.

Question 25

Describe and account for the impact of technological change on ONE production unit you have studied.

Relationship to the Syllabus document

Reference to Syllabus document pp 38-39.

1. **Statements examined:**

- one productive activity from the agricultural, manufacturing or services sector.
- the topic examines the biophysical, technological, social, economic, cultural and political factors affecting the nature and distribution of the productive activity.

2. **Topic Outcomes examined:**

- the interaction between the nature of this activity and biophysical, technological, social, cultural, economic and political factors

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- patterns of and changes in the activity at a variety of scales
- active inquiry methods and a major study to illustrate knowledge and skills.

3. **Subject matter examined:**

- changes in the global nature and distribution of a specific activity - technological change and its impact on the production process, including employment and the spatial distribution of the activity
- a major study of a production unit - the impact of technological change.

4. **Directive terms:**

- Describe and account for.

Better responses

In these, candidates:

- discussed an individual production unit such as a farm, factory or single service provider unit
- examined the impact of technological change rather than simply the use of technology
- stated clearly the causes and impacts of technological change, giving reasons for their use of the terms
- based their responses on relevant facts, examples and statistics
- included relevant technological changes other than those which affected the specific technological unit discussed.

Weaker responses

Here, candidates:

- included data that was not specifically related to technological change
- failed to discuss one productive unit, referring instead to a productive activity, a region, a company/chain or more than one unit

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- failed to describe and account for the impact of technological change on ONE production unit, often implying relevant facts rather than making an explicit statement, and failing to give reasons for the use of new technology
- often wrote prepared responses on a theme from the former Syllabus, described their field trip or wrote all they knew about the production unit.

General Comments

- The Syllabus should be carefully examined and a productive unit chosen that allows all aspects of the Syllabus to be covered
- One productive *unit* should be selected for examination rather than a productive *group* such as a hotel chain or farmers' co-operative.
- Students should distinguish between a unit, company chain, region and activity.
- Textbook examples should be critically evaluated against the Syllabus before use.
- Fieldwork for the productive unit should be used with extensive interpretation and analysis rather than description
- The fact that technological impact has a temporal context requiring analysis prior to, during and post implementation should be clearly indicated.

3 Unit (Additional)

Table 7 : The percentage frequency of Option and question selection

Option	Question Number	% Frequency Questions*	% Frequency of Option*
Biophysical Studies	1	17.3	38.3
	2	21.0	
Development Geography	3	19.6	44.0
	4	24.4	
Political Geography	5	8.3	17.7
	6	9.4	

* Based on 63.7% of 3 Unit candidature.

Option 1 : Biophysical Studies

Question 1

Describe and account for the forces causing change in ONE component of the biophysical environment.

Relationship to the Syllabus document

Reference to Syllabus document pp 48-49

1. **Statements examined:**

- investigation of processes operating in ONE of the four components of the biophysical environment: atmosphere, hydrosphere, lithosphere, biosphere.
- identification of the causes of change in ONE component of the biophysical environment and evaluation of the sensitivity to disturbance.

2. **Topic Outcomes examined:**

- understanding of the natural processes associated with one of the components of the biophysical environment
- identification of the forces causing change and evaluation of the sensitivity to disturbance
- recognition and explanation of rates of change over time and space
- evaluation of sensitivity to change
- use of active inquiry methods and a major study to illustrate knowledge and skills learned.

3. **Subject matter examined:**

- functioning of the selected component of the biophysical environment in a natural state:
 - review of the key processes operating within the component in a natural state
 - variation in the behaviour of the component over time and space
 - the ability of the selected component to recover from disturbances.
- A major study of one environmental issue associated primarily with human disturbances to the selected component, including:

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- significance of the scale of operation of the key processes affected by human disturbance
- nature of disturbances and sensitivity to change within the component
- implications of human-induced disturbances.

4. **Directive terms:**

- Describe and account for.

Better responses

Here, candidates:

- identified one component of the biophysical environment and described the forces causing change in the selected component
- produced the best responses when selecting the hydrosphere
- gave explicit reasoning of how the forces causing change influenced processes and subsequent change in the component over space and time
- drew on a wide range of natural and human-induced change in discussing how the specific component had been altered.

Weaker responses

Here, candidates:

- concentrated on discussing an ecosystem or an environmental issue
- did not address the question and/or adopted a descriptive approach.

General Comments

- Students require a thorough understanding of the process of change to determine the magnitude and rate of change in ONE component of the biophysical environment resulting from forces of natural and human-induced origins
- Variations in the behaviour of the component over time and space should be emphasised
- Fieldwork is a necessary component of study of the biophysical environment.

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Question 2

'Effective management of the biophysical environment requires an understanding of natural processes'.

Evaluate this statement with reference to a major study of ONE environmental issue.

Relationship to the Syllabus document

Reference to Syllabus document pp 48-49

1. Statements examined:

- investigation of processes operating in ONE of the four components of the biophysical environment; viz. atmosphere, hydrosphere, lithosphere, biosphere
- analysis of interactions with other components of the biophysical environment on a variety of scales
- major study of an environmental issue, emphasising the importance of an understanding of processes and the scale for effective management
- major study and active inquiry methods.

2. Topic Outcomes examined:

- explanation of why an understanding of natural processes is necessary for effective management
- a major study and active inquiry methods

3. Subject matter examined:

- a major study of one environmental issue:
 - identification and explanation of the key processes
 - a major study of one environmental issue associated primarily with human disturbances of the selected component, including management implications for an understanding of the key processes.

4. Directive terms:

- Evaluate.

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Better responses

In these, candidates:

- identified their chosen environmental issue
- showed good understanding of natural processes operating in relation to one environmental issue, the nature of disturbances and sensitivity to change
- illustrated the two-way interaction between effective management decisions and natural processes
- evaluated the success or failure of management strategies in terms of ecological sustainability.

Weaker responses

Here candidates:

- revealed limited understanding of the specific environmental issue and processes operating
- failed to show links between effective management and natural processes
- listed or outlined the causes of environmental problems rather than dealing with effective management strategies aimed at overcoming such problems
- used prepared answers from fragile ecosystems instead of referring to one environmental issue as required by the question
- possessed a poor understanding of what constitutes effective management.

General Comments

- Students had difficulty with the term *evaluate*.
- More factual data should be included to support statements.
- Students require practice in planning and structuring extended essay responses.
- Maps and diagrams are only worthwhile if relevant to the question.

Option 2 : Development Geography

Question 3

'The nature and spatial distribution of development are uneven across the globe'.

Analyse this statement with reference to sample studies.

Relationship to the Syllabus document

Reference to Syllabus document pp 50-51

1. **Statements examined:**

- investigation of patterns, rates and impacts of development
- investigation of contemporary geographic issues arising from development
- sample studies and active inquiry methodologies.

2. **Topic Outcomes examined:**

- description of and reason for the nature and spatial distribution of development across the globe
- explanation of different levels and rates of development resulting from a range of economic, technological, social, cultural, political and biophysical factors
- evaluation of the uneven impacts of development at a variety of scales
- use of active inquiry methods and sample studies to illustrate knowledge and skills acquired.

3. **Subject matter examined:**

- Patterns of development at a global scale:
 - definitions of development
 - quantitative and qualitative indicators of development
 - use of indicators to illustrate spatial variations in the levels and rates of development

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- Rates of development
 - economic, technological, social, cultural, political and biophysical forces contributing to development, including the role of:
 - external forces influencing development such as culture contact, trade, financial flows, technological change, transnational corporations, aid and international agreements
 - internal forces influencing development, such as political systems and planning, social structures, cultural attitudes, health, education, transport and other infrastructure, population change, availability of natural resources
- Impacts of development
 - the uneven impacts of development at a variety of scales

4. **Directive terms:**

- Analyse.

Better responses

Here, candidates:

- showed detailed understanding and analysis of internal and external forces and indicators
- identified a variety of scales both within and between countries to highlight spatial distribution
- referred to a variety of sample studies to substantiate arguments
- the linking of sample studies with indicators and forces was strongly evident in the better responses.

Weaker responses

Here, candidates:

- concentrated on defining development and/or listing factors but making little or no attempt at analysis

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- made little use of sample studies to highlight forces or indicators in response to the statement in the question
- found it difficult to understand how to use knowledge analytically
- chose to describe sample studies unrelated to the question.

General Comments

- Students must understand the meaning of *analyse this statement*.
- A well chosen variety of sample studies reflecting spatial distribution and scale is essential.
- Sample studies must be relevant and used appropriately to substantiate or illustrate concepts rather than simply being listed.

Question 4

Evaluate the development issues that affect people's quality of life.

Relationship to the Syllabus document

Reference to Syllabus document pp 50-51

1. Statements examined:

- investigation of contemporary geographic issues arising from development
- integration of sample studies and active inquiry methodologies.

2. Topic Outcomes examined:

- analysis of a variety of contemporary geographical issues relating to specific development issues
- analysis of relationships between quality of life and nations' path of development
- use of active inquiry methods and sample studies to illustrate knowledge and the skills learned.

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3. **Subject matter examined:**

- patterns of development on a global scale:
 - definitions of development
 - quantitative and qualitative indicators of development
- impacts of development
 - relationships between quality of life and paths of development of nations
- development issues
 - the rights and status of indigenous peoples, the role and status of women, access to food, clean water, health services, education, housing and employment, care of children, the aged and special groups, population growth and movements, patterns of wealth and poverty, land ownership and tenure, changes to social and political power, debts and access to investment, environmental quality
 - ecologically sustainable development

4. **Directive terms:**

- Evaluate.

Better responses

In these, candidates:

- showed a thorough understanding of development issues, linking them to people's quality of life
- gave evidence of a good analysis of variations between nations
- used a diversity of sample studies to illustrate issues, often drawing a clear comparison between *developed* and *developing*.
- showed their ability to evaluate issues
- evaluated, with perspicacity, the development issues that affect peoples' quality of life.

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Weaker responses

Here, candidates:

- concentrated on a simple description of development that was often economically based
- made limited use of sample studies
- used prepared case study answers on one nation only
- listed problems and causes of development problems
- outlined internal or external forces contributing to development issues without consideration of their impact on quality of life
- presented answers in which indicators dominated the essay
- used emotive arguments relating to stories of hardship.

General Comments

- Identification and understanding of the list of development issues cited in the Syllabus is essential.
- Students must clearly understand the difference between *indicators* and *forces*.

Option 3 : Political Geography

Question 5

Using sample studies, describe and account for the geographical impacts of political tensions and conflicts.

Relationship to the Syllabus document

Reference to Syllabus document pp 52-53

1. Statements examined:

- investigation of political tensions and conflicts and the implications for people and environments

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- analysis of the causes of political tensions and conflicts at a variety of scales
- examination of the geographical consequences of political tensions and conflicts for communities, regions and nations
- provision of sample studies and active inquiry methods.

2. **Topic Outcomes examined:**

- description of the nature and distribution of political tensions and conflicts
- analysis of causes of political tensions and conflicts
- explanation of geographical impacts of political tensions and conflicts
- use of active inquiry methods and sample studies to illustrate knowledge and skills learned.

3. **Subject matter examined:**

- political tensions and conflicts
 - the nature and distribution of political tensions and conflicts at global, regional, national and local or community scales
- causes of political tension and conflicts
 - access to resources and wealth, ideology, ethnicity, culture contact, indigenous rights, religion and disputes over territory and land-use on a variety of scales
- geographical impacts of political tensions and conflicts
 - population change and movements, border changes, environmental impacts, social and cultural impacts, economic impacts, human rights implications, emergence of protest movements including those that are community-based
- sample studies should be used.

4. **Directive terms:**

- Describe and account for.

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Better responses

Here, candidates:

- demonstrated a detailed understanding in explaining a variety of geographic impacts of political tensions and conflicts
- made accurate and detailed use of a number of sample studies
- gave a well informed analysis of the impacts and accounted for them meticulously.

Weaker responses

Here, candidates:

- used a few sample studies and explained a limited number of geographical impacts
- referred to sample studies only

General Comments

- Students need to use sample studies on a variety of scales to illustrate subject matter included in the Syllabus.
- Students must be able to distinguish between *causes* and *impacts*.
- Students should learn how to plan and organise responses.
- Integration of sample studies with the subject matter of the Syllabus is vital.

Question 6

'The nature and causes of political tensions and conflicts are different at a variety of scales'.

Evaluate this statement.

Relationship to the Syllabus document

Reference to Syllabus document pp 52-53

1. Statements examined:

- investigation of political tensions and conflicts and the implications for people and environments

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- analysis of the causes of political tensions and conflicts at a variety of scales
- examination of the geographic consequences of political tensions and conflicts for communities, regions and nations
- use of sample studies and active inquiry methods.

2. **Topic Outcomes examined:**

- description of the nature and distribution of political tensions and conflicts
- analysis of causes of political tensions and conflicts
- use of active inquiry methods and sample studies to illustrate knowledge and skills learned.

3. **Subject matter examined:**

- political tensions and conflicts
 - the nature and distribution of political tensions and conflicts at global, regional, national and local or community levels
- causes of political tension and conflicts
 - access to resources and wealth, ideology, ethnicity, culture contact, indigenous rights, religion and disputes over territory and land-use at a variety of scales
- sample studies should be used.

4. **Directive terms:**

- Evaluate.

Better responses

Here, candidates

- acknowledged the link between the *nature* and the *causes* of political tension and conflict and the *scales* at which this occurs

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- distinguished between political tension and conflict
- explained the causes in detail
- referred to a range of sample studies and integrated these into the text
- evaluated the statement.

Weaker responses

Here, candidates

- did not recognise the significance of the question
- cited few examples and/or examples at limited scales
- provided an in-depth analysis of only one or two case studies, thus limiting their ability to respond to this specific question
- used sample studies with implied reference to scale only
- used sample studies which referred to political tension only.

General Comments

- Many students did not know how to evaluate information.
- Although students were acquainted with a wide variety of sample studies, the majority lacked the ability to use this material to answer a specific question.