BOARD OF STUDIES
NEW SOUTH WALES

1997 HSC

EXAMINATION REPORT

Geography

1997 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE
EXAMINATION REPORT
GEOGRAPHY

Foreword

This examination report seeks to provide teachers of 2 Unit and 3 Unit Geography with extensive comments about the 1997 Geography examination and marking operations. These comments are designed to enable teachers preparing candidates for examination in this subject to be better informed about the following:

- the manner in which the HSC examination is developed

- sections of the Syllabus from which questions are drawn

- the generalised marking guide used in the examination marking operation

- the examination marking operation and assurance of marking standards

- content and organisation of responses to particular questions from both better and weaker candidates, and a weaker candidate response to such questions

- 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 examination of the Stage 6 Geography 2/3 Unit (Common) and 3 Unit Syllabus.

Marking Procedures and Operations

Selection of Markers

Markers are selected according to a set of criteria laid down by the Board of Studies. 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.

In 1997 the Board of Studies nominated Geography as one of the subjects that would be *day–marked*. It was therefore necessary that people selected for the marking operation should be available for the specified marking period between 9.00 am and 5.00 pm as well as on Saturdays. As this was a very concentrated marking period it was essential that all markers should be available for all marking sessions. The day–marking procedure provided an increased opportunity for teachers to participate in the marking process who have, in the past, been unable to do so either because of distance from the marking centre or because of family commitments. Consequently, the 1997 marking exercise included a significant number of new markers and Senior Markers.

Teachers indicate on their application forms the Options at 2 Unit and 3 Unit that they have previously taught. This information is considered when markers are allocated to mark specific questions.

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

- to lead and coordinate a group of markers

- to organise the briefing sessions

- to set criteria in consultation with the markers and maintain reliability of marking

- to maintain a close watch on discrepancies and act promptly to resolve them.

Purpose of the Marking Operation

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

Double–Marking

All questions requiring a written response in 2/3 Unit and 3 Unit are double–marked. This approach assumes that each marker will provide a reliable judgment; the second marker is NOT aware of the mark provided by the first marker.

Discrepancies

Discrepancies between the two marks awarded occur in the event of:

- the award of a single mark for a question (eg extended response) by two markers, with the difference between the two marks awarded being equal to or greater than one third of the range of marks allocated to the question;

- the mark awarded for the question comprising marks awarded to a number of parts, with the difference between the two marks awarded for the whole question being 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. A third mark is awarded by the Senior Marker who has no prior knowledge of the first two 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 that 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. Explanatory. Factually correct. Attempt 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.	
D	7 6 5 4	**Below Average** Little use of factual data to support generalisations. Conclusions inconsistent with data or argument or no conclusions given	
E	3 2 1	**Poor** Absence of factual data. Much irrelevant material. Incoherent or incomprehensible.	
	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. While different Generalised Marking Guides are established for marking different kinds of questions, they have been framed with the intention of achieving comparable standards (**ie, distribution and mean**) across the different types of questions.

Table 2 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 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 try 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 (a standard deviation of 4). The Marker Reliability Operation at the Marking Centre has two important roles:

1   It assists Supervisors of Marking (SOMs) 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 which assist the SOM and SMs to ascertain whether the Generalised Marking Guide is providing 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 reports enable the SOM and SMs to check that the distribution of marks and the mean established during the Pilot Marking operation are 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. It is very difficult for markers to maintain constant 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 to assist in the development of appropriate Generalised Marking Guides and 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	2308	11.27	5.22
19	3334	12.83	4.79
20	2546	13.30	5.04
21	2935	13.06	4.58
22	2874	14.03	5.37
23	4552	12.88	4.47
24	4801	12.20	4.84
25	2429	13.43	5.42
		Mean = 12.88 (out of 25 marks)	

3   **Evaluation**

Prior to the end of the marking operation, Senior Markers and markers are asked to comment on the degree of competence with which candidates handled specific questions. Comments are also sought which could assist teachers in the preparation of students for future examinations. 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.

Introduction

In 1997, 8810 candidates presented for the Stage 6 Geography 2/3 Unit paper. This represents an increase of 119 candidates on the 1996 candidature. 2460 candidates sat for the 3 Unit (Additional) paper, representing a slight increase on the previous year's candidature.

The Geography 2/3 Unit examination format consisted of:

- **Section I**   (25 marks)

  - **Part A**   (15 marks) multiple–choice based on skills

  - **Part B**   (10 marks) short–answer based on skills

- **Section II**   (75 marks)

  - choice of three out of four options from which one question is attempted

  - each option contains two questions, one of which is to be structured and based on the Broadsheet

- **Broadsheet**

  One page of this is dedicated to stimulus material related to a specific Option

  Note: From 1998 this will no longer be the case. Each page of the Broadsheet may include a *variety* of stimulus materials appropriate *to more than one option*.

The 2/3 Unit paper and the 3 Unit (Additional) papers were, on the whole, well received for the quality of the questions, (allowing candidates the opportunity to show their command of the discipline) and, again, for the stimulating nature of the Broadsheet. The performance of candidates in these papers was generally sound, indicating that the majority of students were well prepared for this examination. Attention must be drawn, however, to the fact that the responses by candidates to the paper(s) were very poorly numbered. Many students wrongly labelled essay responses, and this resulted in an extraordinary number of redirections of scripts to the appropriate marking group.

Students must practise indicating clearly, both on the examination booklet cover and the first page of their essay, the correct number of the question they are answering.

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.***

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 this year.

5 There still appears to be some uncertainty about what constitutes sample studies as specified in the Syllabus document.

6 Some candidates came prepared with an answer to an anticipated question and responded to such a question irrespective of what was asked in the examination.

7 Again, a number of 3 Unit scripts were outstanding and a tribute to both the candidates and their preparation. There were also a number of exceptional 2 Unit scripts which deserve mention.

The 1997 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, in 1997, consisted of six members, three of whom were practising teachers who were not currently teaching Year 12, and three University academics.

Twelve days of meetings took place between January and July to develop the examination papers and the associated broadsheet. All papers and broadsheet stimulus material underwent several drafts and editorial changes prior to the production of a final version. Questions were developed in accordance with the following criteria:

(i) Syllabus Outcomes must be examined together with geographic skills, fieldwork and contemporary issues

(ii) Language must be clear, precise and unambiguous

(iii) Questions must be able to be answered within the time frame and under examination conditions.

Other responsibilities of the Examination Committee:

• Nomination of Assessors for each of the papers from the expressions of interest forwarded by experienced teachers not teaching Year 12 in 1997.

• Briefing of Senior Markers concerning the examination questions, sections of the Syllabus from which they were drawn and the Syllabus Outcomes examined.

• Review of all Generalised Marking Guides to be used in the examination by the Supervisor of Marking assisted by members of the Examination Committee. These were finalised in consultation with Senior Markers, the Supervisor of Marking and the Examination Committee Chairperson.

• Committee members assisted the Supervisor of Marking in the collection and collation of feedback from Senior Markers for inclusion in this report and for the information of the 1998 Examination Committee by the Chairperson.

• Compilation of the Examination Report by the Supervisor of Marking for public distribution

• Meeting of the Supervisor of Marking and the Chairperson with the Board of Studies Consultative Committee to determine the final distribution of marks in Geography.

2/3 Unit (Common)

Section I   Part A

Questions 1 to 15 (1 mark each)

For each question in Part A, reference was 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 (Questions 1–15)

Common Part A Questions	Syllabus Objective and page reference	Outcome(s)	Subject Matter	Rationale
1	P27 Ability to investigate	1(c) Read, interpret and analyse graphs including bar graphs	Bar graph *Cost of waste disposal*	Test graphical interpretation skills
2	P27 Ability to investigate	1(c) Read, interpret and analyse graphs including pie graphs	Typical *waste*	Test ability to read, interpret and analyse pie graphs
3	P27 Ability to investigate	1(d) Make quantitative and qualitative analysis of statistical information presented in a variety of forms including tables	*Pollutants in Megacities* Table	Test quantitative statistical interpretation skills
4	P27 Ability to investigate	1(b) Read, interpret and analyse graphs including composite and multiple feature graphs and flow line maps	*What's Choking Us* flowchart	Test qualitative statistical interpretational skills
5	P27 Ability to investigate	1(b) Read, interpret and analyse maps (metric and imperial) including topographic maps	Nambour Mapsheet	Test topographic map – interpretation skills – map scale and density
6	P27 Ability to investigate	1(b) Read, interpret and analyse maps (metric and imperial) including topographic maps	Nambour Mapsheet	Test topographic map interpretation skills – point coordinates, contour interpretation and direction
7	P27 Ability to investigate	1(b) Read, interpret and analyse maps (metric and imperial) including topographic maps	Nambour Mapsheet	Test topographic map interpretation skills – point coordinates, and latitude and longitude
8	P27 Ability to investigate	1(b) Read, interpret and analyse maps (metric and imperial) including topographic maps	Nambour Mapsheet	Test topographic map interpretation skills – point coordinates, bearing
9	P27 Ability to investigate	1(b) Read, interpret and analyse maps (metric and imperial) including topographic maps	Nambour Mapsheet	Test topographic map interpretation skills – scale
10	P27 Ability to investigate	1(b) Read, interpret and analyse maps (metric and imperial) including topographic maps	Noumea Mapsheet	Test topographic map interpretation skills – quadrants and scale
11	P27 Ability to investigate	1(b) Read, interpret and analyse maps (metric and imperial) including topographic maps	Noumea Mapsheet	Test topographic map interpretation skills – point coordinates, scale and gradient

Common Part A Questions	Syllabus Objective and Page Reference	Outcome(s)	Subject Matter	Rationale
12	P27 Ability to investigate	1(b) Read, interpret and analyse maps (metric and imperial) including topographic maps	Noumea Mapsheet	Test topographic map interpretation skills - point coordinates and contour interpretation
13	P27 Ability to investigate	1(c) Read, interpret and analyse graphs including bar graphs	*Percentage of Population residing in Urban Areas* graph	Test graphical interpretation skills and interpret quantitative statistical information
14	P27 Ability to investigate	1(d) Interpret composite line graphs	*Population Growth* graph	Test ability to interpret graph
15	P27 Ability to investigate	1(d) Make quantitative and qualitative analysis of statistical information presented in a variety of forms, including tables	*Selected Urban Statistics* table	Test quantitative statistical interpretation skills

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

Table 4:   Candidate performance in Section I 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	62.02
2	A	87.37
3	A	75.23
4	B	42.10
5	B	74.35
6	C	66.15
7	D	51.27
8	C	72.11
9	D	38.04
10	A	81.00
11	B	44.20
12	A	64.98
13	D	93.53
14	A	43.84
15	B	90.30

The mean was 9.86 and the standard deviation 2.655.

Comments

General

The mean of 9.86 out of 15 is relatively high, given the mean of 10/20 required for the extended response component of the examination. The standard deviation of 2.655 indicates a clustering of scores relative to the standard deviation ideal of 4 for the extended essay component. The Examination Committee will continue to make distracters more difficult to distinguish in order to achieve a mean in the vicinity of 7.5 and a standard deviation of 4.

Candidates appeared to have a sound knowledge not only of graphical interpretation skills, but also map–reading skills including point and area references. There seemed, however, to be some difficulty in relation to map scales, latitude and longitude and gradient.

Specific

The following questions were handled least well.

- Question 1 required the name of the country that has $100 per tonne cost for waste disposal. 36.49% of candidates chose Norway rather than Ireland.

- Question 4 asked for the type of information represented in the flowchart. 31.11% of candidates selected *primary sources* rather than *qualitative data*.

- Question 7 asked for the latitude and longitude of the Big Cow tourist facility at GR 949498. 39.28% of candidates chose 152°58'E 26°35'S rather than 26°35'S 152°58'E.

- Question 9 required the approximation of the scale of the location map of Yandina when used with the topographic map of Nambour. There seemed to be general confusion here, with 23.62% choosing 1:250,000 and 25.16% choosing 1:350,000 rather than 1:500,000.

- Question 11 required the calculation of the gradient between two given grid references. 36.15% chose 1:10 as opposed to 1:100.

- Question 14 required the urban population in more developed countries in the year 2000 to be estimated from the graph given. 43.84% of candidates selected 1 billion rather than 4 billion.

Section I Part B

Questions 16 and 17

For each question in Part B, reference is made to the Syllabus Objective(s) and Outcome(s), the referred stimulus material and the question rationale relating to specific skill(s) tested.

Table 5

Part B Question number	Syllabus Objective(s) and page reference	Outcome(s)	Subject Matter	Rationale
16 (a)-(d)	P27 Ability to investigate	1(b) Ability to read, interpret and analyse maps including special feature maps (cross sections)	*West to East cross-section across Australia*	Test ability to interpret scale and vertical exaggeration
17	P27 Ability to investigate P28 Ability to communicate P29 Attitudes and values: 1 Demonstrate an interest in and concern for environments on a variety of scales 2 Demonstrate a commitment to social justice	1(f) Ability to undertake geographic research including fieldwork, analysing data and evaluating data ... 2(c) Ability to communicate the inquiry sequence and findings of research including fieldwork	Contemporary geographic issue	Test ability to: 1 identify a contemporary geographic issue 2 identify variables about which information need be gathered to investigate the contemporary geographic issue, and 3 identify a method of data collection

Question 16 (a-d)

General Comments

- Candidates experienced greater difficulty with Question 16 than with Question 17. The majority were unable to indicate why specific calculations are expressed as they are.

- Students appeared unable to deal with those skills that would be considered significant to a topographic study.

Better Responses

In these, candidates:

- showed an understanding of the purpose of vertical exaggeration as a concept and successfully transferred this to the practical application in the Australian transect

- were also able to derive and express the geographic concept of scale accurately

- could select a specific contemporary geographic issue which allowed scope for discussion

- made considered choices concerning specific aspects of the chosen issue to be researched, with relevant, logical and knowledgeable reasons being given to justify the choices made. Relevant methods of inquiry were chosen.

- were able to calculate accurately.

Weaker Responses

Here, candidates:

- displayed only a limited command of the concept of scale

- could neither calculate nor explain vertical exaggeration in many cases

- were ambiguous in their choice of a contemporary issue to research and generally did not target specific aspects of the issue

- confused the methodology (c) with the subjects of investigation (b). Often the method of investigation in (c) did not relate to the aspect of the issue identified in (b).

Question 17 (a-c)

General Comments

- In this question only a small number of students made specific reference to the Broadsheet.

- Few students referred to their Senior Geography Projects or fieldwork.

- The parts to this question were frequently misinterpreted.

- Many students seemed compelled to use the cross–section and struggled to find a contemporary issue.

Better Responses

Here, students:

- identified a contemporary example with both a physical and human dimension

- correctly differentiated between information (things) and methodology

- gave clear reasoning that supported the *things* or variables

- ensured that the issue related to more than a statement or a geographic term/feature

- reflected fieldwork or SGP methodology

- could refer to academically correct issues and reasons

- gave responses that related to issues in a candidate's local area

- could *explain how to use* a method rather than simply stating a method.

Weaker Responses

In these, students:

- were unfamiliar with the appropriate methodology to be used

- confused *methodology* with *sources of data*

- named a feature (or problem) of the environment

- used methodology or reasoning that was not related to the two things about which they would need to gather information to investigate the specific issues

- based their responses on the cross–section used in Question 16

- gave vague and broad sources for *collecting* data eg, libraries, Internet

- referred to issues that could not be realistically investigated.

2/3 Unit (Common)

Section II Options

Questions 18-25

Candidate frequency of response to Questions 18-25

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

Table 6: Frequency of Option and Question Selection

Options	Question Number	Percentage of total responses	Percentage choice of option
Natural Resources	*18	8.85	
	19	12.79	21.64
Productive Activity	*20	9.77	
	21	11.26	21.03
Fragile Ecosystems	*22	11.02	
	23	17.46	28.48
Large Cities	*24	18.41	
	25	9.32	27.73

*Indicates structured question

The Table shows a relatively even distribution of the options chosen by candidates. Significantly there was a definite preference for the unstructured rather than the structured questions, representing a significant shift from the choices in the 1996 examination.

As in the previous examination report (1996), two points need to be made concerning the structured questions within each of the Options:

1   The structured questions in the 1997 examination followed the specifications indicated in the Examination Specifications for Geography (BOS) 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.

2   Responses in 1997 were the reverse of those of the previous year, with a greater percentage of students choosing to answer the unstructured question within each option. The relativity between the structured and unstructured questions is accounted for in the marking operation, as can be seen by reference to Table 2.

Comment also needs to be made about the lack of use of explanatory maps, diagrams, tables, figures, etc. Students need to be encouraged to practise 'good Geography' and to make appropriate use of illustrative material in their essays.

Section II   Options

Option 1   Natural Resources

Question 18

Using the photographs on page 1 of the Broadsheet and your knowledge of natural resources, write an extended response on:

Issues Related to the Use of Natural Resources

In your response:

(a)   **with reference to each photograph, identify ONE potential political issue and ONE potential social issue that could arise;**

(b)   **discuss the social issues related to the use of natural resources at different scales and time;**

(c)   **outline a change in resource management arising from changes in social and political attitudes.**

Relationship to the Syllabus Document

(Syllabus Document reference: Pp 36-37)

1   Statement(s) examined

- spatial patterns and consequences of the distribution and consumption of natural resources at different scales over a period of time

- environmental, social, political, economic and technological issues arising from resource utilisation.

2   Topic Outcomes examined

- analysis of the social and political issues related to the use of natural resources at different scales and time

- demonstration of an understanding of different strategies of resource management

- use of active inquiry methods and sample studies

3   Subject matter examined

Issues related to the use of natural resources:

- environmental issues such as pollution and land degradation;
- social issues including the impact on and responses of indigenous peoples;
- political issues such as sovereignty, trade agreements and barriers, international treaties; union action and Green politics.

4   Directive terms used

identify, discuss, outline

Better Responses

In these, candidates:

- read the whole question carefully, and then attempted to answer it

- referred to realistic and relevant issues in (a)

- identified social issues and referred to both different scales and time

- used appropriate sample studies to illustrate different scales - local, national etc, and time

- used appropriate geographical concepts to describe photographs eg, land degradation

- submitted succinct answers

- used specific examples of resource management (c)

- allocated time according to mark allocation.

Weaker Responses

In these candidates:

- had difficulty in identifying features from photographs

- wrote about issues in general — not specifically about social issues in (b)

- had no understanding of the meaning of the term *scale*

- wrote at length about either a case study or natural resources in general, without referring to the question

- confused *environmental* with *social* issues; failed to make connections between the two

- referred to incorrect stimulus material.

General Comments

- Students must practise answering the specific question.

- Sample studies illustrating different scales and changes over a period of time must be clearly identified.

- Resource use indicated must have positive as well as negative results.

- A balanced view must be given, particularly in relation to government action and TNCs.

- Questions tend to be worded *from the Syllabus* . Students must be familiar with the terminology.

- Time management in examinations is of prime importance.

- Essay–writing skills are important — ie, candidates must show their understanding of key words.

Question 19

With reference to sample studies, discuss management strategies, including those practised by indigenous peoples, used to conserve and utilise natural resources, at a variety of scales.

Relationship to the Syllabus Document

(Syllabus Document reference: Pp 36-37)

1   Statement(s) examined

- natural resource–management strategies

- sample studies and active inquiry methodologies.

2   Topic Outcome(s) examined

• understanding of different strategies of resource–management

• evaluation of management strategies on a variety of scales, including those practised by indigenous peoples

• use of active inquiry methods and sample studies.

3   Subject matter examined

Strategies of Resource Management:

• management strategies to conserve and utilise natural resources at local, national and regional levels as well as on global scales, including those practised by indigenous peoples

• strategies adopted by government and non-government organisations, political/economic blocs, transnational corporations and business entities at regional, national and global scales

• changes in management strategies arising from changes in economy, technology, environmental quality, social and political attitudes.

4   Directive terms used

discuss

Better Responses

In these, candidates:

• dealt with the relevant concepts of the components of the question — natural resource, conservation, utilisation, management strategies

• provided detailed sample studies covering all scales, thus showing a greater understanding of this topic

• showed an appreciation of management and its importance across all scales.

• concentrated on identification of resource, eg, timer, clean water, **not** on *save the environment* issues.

Weaker Responses

In these, candidates:

• showed a lack of understanding of a natural resource

• discussed disjointed concepts throughout

• used examples instead of sample studies to answer the question

• were emotional and idealistic, expressing their opinions in very basic terms

- showed a lack of understanding of indigenous peoples (ie their role and their customs)

- concentrated mainly on environmental issues

- simply defined and listed natural resources.

General   Comments

In studying this unit *(Natural Resources)* there is need to discriminate between management strategies for natural resources and management strategies for fragile ecosystems.

Students seemed unable to apply their understanding of a natural resource, ie, to answer the question. They confused *issues* and *management strategies* and relied too much on current textbook information.

Option 2   Productive Activity

Question 20

Use the table headed GINGER, shown on page 2 of the Broadsheet, and your knowledge of ONE production unit that you have studied, to write an extended response on:

A Production Unit

In your response:

(a)   name and locate the production unit you have studied;

(b)   compare and contrast the linkages, at a variety of scales, of the production unit you have studied, with the linkages associated with a similar production unit identified from the table;

(c)   discuss how ownership, decision–making, and control affect the production unit you have studied.

1   Statement(s) 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

- issues arising from the interaction of such activity with the biophysical and human environments

2   Topic Outcomes examined

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

- patterns of and changes in the specific activity at a variety of scales

- use of active inquiry methods and a major study to illustrate knowledge and the skills learned.

3   Subject matter examined

A major study of ONE production unit — such as a farm, a factory, a service provider — from within the productive activity selected above to include:

- linkages at a variety of scales

- ownership, decision making and control within the unit.

4   Directive terms used

name, locate, compare, contrast, discuss

Better Responses

In these, candidates:

- showed sound knowledge of the specific productive unit

- attempted all three components of the question and provided supporting data

- clearly understood the concept of a variety of scales involved and were able to apply it to both their unit and the stimulus

- showed their recognition of the role/impact of decision–making/ownership on their unit and made good use of supporting data.

Weaker Responses

In these, students:

- had a prepared form of a service sector unit

- failed to discuss either linkages or ownership

- disregarded the stimulus or misinterpreted the comparisons with or contrasts to their selected unit

- selected too large a production unit, eg, productivity/activity at a regional/local level — rice–growing in Leeton, hotel chain and viticulture in the Hunter Valley

- showed no recognition of the linkages at a variety of scales

- were uncertain about what sector the stimulus they needed belonged to, ie, attempted often to compare/relate their productive activity to all three sectors

- failed to interpret the stimulus — merely copied information.

General Comments

- The better responses dealt with a production unit belonging to either the agricultural sector or the factory/manufacturing sector. Those who selected a service unit had great difficulty in discussing it.

- Although a large range of sample studies (Production Units) were studied, the following proved most popular:

  > Rice farming
  > Dairying
  > Grain fed beef
  > ITT Sheraton (as a chain) Hotels
  > Wheat, sheep
  > Altona, Toyota
  > Viticulture

Option 2   Productive Activity

Question 21

Identify and discuss issues arising from the interaction of ONE productive activity with the biophysical and human environments.

1   Statement(s) examined

- one productive activity from the agriculture, manufacturing or services sector

- the biophysical, technological, social, economic, cultural and political factors affecting the nature and distribution of the specific productive activity

- the issues arising from the interaction of such activity with the biophysical and human environment.

2   Topic Outcomes examined

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

- identification and discussion of issues arising from the interaction of this activity with the biophysical and human environment.

3 Subject matter examined

Changes in the Global Nature and Distribution of this Activity:

* changing nature of the production process

* impacts of consumption

* changes in ownership, decision–making and control

* technological change and impact on the nature of the production process, employment and spatial distribution

* changes in political and economic influences

* interactions with the physical environment.

4 Directive terms used

identify, discuss

Better Responses

In these, candidates:

* clearly identified a productive activity and provided a detailed description and analysis of a variety of interactions and associated issues in terms of both biophysical and human environments, often at a variety of scales.

* showed that clear lines are made between interaction and resulting issues. Issues were discussed, including factual details and statistics, as well as sample studies; case studies of a production unit were also used to illustrate points raised. The better responses tended to focus on the issues, such as land degradation, population displacement, ownership and control, and generally produced a well balanced and scholarly piece of writing. Use of geographical terminology was very good and these candidates showed a sound knowledge of the productive activity at a variety of scales, particularly at the global scale.

Weaker Responses

In these, candidates:

* tended to describe forces which influence either the nature and location of a productive activity or changes in the operation of the productive activity. Poorer responses were confused by the term *human environment* and failed to distinguish between *interactions* and *issues*.

* described the activities of a particular production unit without making any reference to interactions or issues. A significant number of those who chose *retailing* produced very poor responses. Similarly, many students who chose *car manufacturing* wrote about the impact of the **product** ie, the car, on the biophysical environment.

General Comments

- Discussion of retailing was very poor since the question did not lend itself to this study.

- Interactions with or issues involving the biophysical environment were handled considerably better than those concerning the human environment. Most students had a poor understanding of the human environment.

- A large number of students were confused between *production unit* and *productive activity*.

The best answers dealt with:

- viticulture
- commercial dairying
- rice farming
- some tourism and one aquaculture centre
- other types of manufacturing

Poorer answers dealt with:

- retailing
- car manufacturing
- tourism

- Many students wrongly labelled Questions 20, 21, 19 and 23. Students must ensure that answers are clearly and correctly labelled.

- The large number of prepared answers on a production unit suggested that many candidates did not expect a structured question. A structured question based on a major study/Broadsheet, was perhaps too challenging for many.

- Very few candidates used diagrams appropriately, indicating that more practice is needed in both studying and interpreting such aids.

Option 3   Fragile Ecosystems

Question 22

Using the stimulus material on Noumea on page 3 of the Broadsheet and your knowledge of Fragile Ecosystems, write an extended response on:

Management of Ecosystems

In your response:

(a)   identify, from the map, a fragile ecosystem that is vulnerable to human–induced disturbance, and state the possible causes of this disturbance;

(b) **discuss the management strategies that could be adopted to reduce the impact of this human induced disturbance;**

(c) **using sample studies, discuss the effectiveness of management strategies to reduce the impact of human–induced disturbance.**

Relationship to the Syllabus Document

(Syllabus document reference: Pp32-33)

1   Statement(s) examined

- ecosystems which may be classified as vulnerable to human–induced change

- examination of the nature, magnitude and rate of change as a consequence of both natural and human–induced change

- the need for responsible management

- sample studies related to the study of ecosystems

2   Topic Outcomes examined

- explanation of why some ecosystems are vulnerable to human–induced change

- identification of the nature and extent of stress on ecosystems caused by human–induced ecosystem change

- recognition of the need for responsible management of ecosystems

- use of active inquiry methods and sample studies to illustrate knowledge and skills learned.

3   Subject matter examined

Ecosystems and their functioning:

- causes of ecosystem vulnerability

- the ways and extent to which people are able to control or disturb ecosystems

- the magnitude and rate of human–induced ecosystem change causing stress on ecosystems

Management of Ecosystems:

- management strategies to preserve and conserve fragile ecosystems at a variety of scales

- changes in management strategies

- evaluation of management strategies

4   Directive terms used

identify, state, discuss

Better responses

In these, candidates:

- were able to identify a fragile ecosystem and locate it accurately from the map

- discussed causes of disturbance to the ecosystem

- gave a scholarly discussion of relevant management strategies

- successfully evaluated the effectiveness of management strategies, referring to a number of sample studies.

Weaker responses

In these, candidates:

- provided a poor selection of ecosystems, and obviously possessed limited knowledge of management strategies. The majority could describe only a small number of sample studies without referring to the effectiveness of such management strategies

- attempted only parts (a) and (b) of the question, ignoring any reference to management strategies

- failed to discuss parts (a) and (b); their responses were prepared answers on management strategies

- in some cases, cut up the Broadsheet and pasted in their examination booklet sections of the map (Noumea) to illustrate their answers: this often did not achieve the desired outcome, however, and is **NOT** a recommended practice.

Question 23

Analyse the reasons for the protection of ecosystems at a variety of scales.

Relationship to the Syllabus Document

(Syllabus document reference: Pp32-33)

1   Statement(s) examined

- examination of the nature, magnitude and rate of change as a consequence of both natural and human–induced change

- the need for responsible management

- sample studies related to the study of ecosystems

25

2   Topic Outcomes examined

- discussion of the rationale for the protection of ecosystems

- identification of the nature and extent of stress on ecosystems caused by human–induced ecosystem change

- recognition of the need for responsible management of ecosystems

- use of active inquiry methods and sample studies to illustrate knowledge and skills learned

3   Subject matter examined

The protection of ecosystems:

- reasons for the protection of ecosystems such as the maintenance of genetic diversity, utility value, intrinsic value, the need for unimpeded natural change.

4   Directive terms used

analyse

Better Responses

In these, candidates:

- were able to analyse, rather than describe, the reasons for protection and to examine a range of sample studies at a variety of scales. By means of a detailed analysis, they identified the merits of protection for each sample study

- were able to show that an alternative and acceptable interpretation of the question was an analysis of the reasons for the protection of ecosystems at a variety of scales

- combined both these approaches in some answers, giving reasons for protection and indicating the necessity to achieve this at a variety of scales.

Weaker Responses

In these, candidates:

- lacked the flexibility to adapt the material they had learnt to the specific needs of the question, ie, they provided rote–learned sample studies involving the value, the disturbance and the management of ecosystems

- in many cases students did not understand the concept of scale

- confused management strategies with reasons for protection

- did not use sample studies, made a general statement about ecosystems or clearly misunderstood the concept of the ecosystem, giving for example, ocean, Nepal, Snowy Mountains

- focused on human disturbances.

General Comments

- Sample studies should be selected that reflect a variety of scales and alert students to the fact that successful management and protection occur at such scales

- The meaning of local, national, global scales must be dealt with in a variety of sample studies and students should understand the difference

- The Syllabus mentions management at a variety of scales **not** protection at a variety of scales.

Option 4   Large Cities

Question 24

Using the stimulus material on page 4 of the Broadsheet, and your knowledge of large cities, write an extended response on:

Urbanisation

In your response:

(a) **describe the changes over time in the rates and directions of urbanisation in less developed countries;**

(b) **identify the reasons for urbanisation in less developed countries;**

(c) **discuss the impacts of the growth of large cities in less developed countries.**

Relationship to the Syllabus Document

(Syllabus document reference: Pp34-35)

1   Statement(s) examined

- investigation of large cities in the context of world urbanisation and the changing global economy

- investigation of the growth of large cities in Africa, Asia and Central America and the impacts of growth on rural and urban areas.

2   Topic Outcomes examined

- description and analysis of the patterns of urbanisation

- description of changes in urban processes over time and place

- analysis of relationships between urban processes, environmental quality and social well–being.

3 Subject matter examined

Urbanisation:

- changes over a period of time in rates and directions of urbanisation such as rapid urbanisation in the developing world

- economic, social, cultural, political and environmental forces affecting the nature and rates of urbanisation at different times and in different places

The roles of large cities:

- the growth and roles of large cities in Africa, Asia, Central and South America

4 Directive terms used

describe, identify, discuss

Better Responses

In these, candidates:

- defined urbanisation and were aware of the difference between urban growth and rates of urbanisation

- analysed stimulus material, used it selectively, with examples and statistics to support their statements

- identified a variety of reasons for urbanisation

- presented a well balanced and scholarly response to the question.

Weaker Responses

In these, candidates:

- tended to make simple observations, based, often incorrectly, on the stimulus material or gave no examples actually drawn from their own knowledge

- provided superficial discussion of push/pull factors and showed little understanding of urbanisation

- often provided a list of generalised illustrations in the impacts section of their answer.

General Comments

Candidates ignored the directive *directions of urbanisation in less developed countries* in the question. In their responses, many failed to show an understanding of the terms associated with *urbanisation*. While the majority were able to read column graphs, the same did not apply to compound line graphs. Most candidates showed an understanding of the impacts of urbanisation , although their knowledge of the reasons for it was only superficial. Whilst some of the weaker responses were lengthy, they were of poor quality.

Question 25

Identify management issues, and discuss the role of government in addressing these issues, in your major study of a large city of at least 2 million people.

This question clearly differentiated between capable and poor students.

Relationship to the Syllabus Document

(Syllabus document reference: Pp34-35)

1   Statement(s) examined

- investigation of large cities in the context of world urbanisation and changing global economy

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

- analysis of the processes generated by social, political and cultural interactions within the city.

2   Topic Outcomes examined

- identification of management issues and explanation of the role of government in large cities

- use of active inquiry methods and a major study to illustrate knowledge and skills learned

3   Subject matter examined

A major study of ONE large city:
- the changing relationship of the large city with its hinterland

- how the geography of the city reflects emerging differences in consumption, culture, religion, gender, sexuality, age, family structure, socio-economic status and government regulations

- relationships between urban processes and social well-being such as access to employment, housing, education, health care and leisure spaces

- relationship between urban processes and environmental quality

- current management issues in this large city and plans for its future

4   Directive terms used

identify, discuss

Better Responses

In these, candidates:

• clearly identified a range of issues, such as environmental, social, political, planning, biophysical and spatial issues

• provided full and detailed explanation and description of a variety of CURRENT management issues

• provided detailed information on government responses to management issues including strategies, legislation, policies, statistics

• made an evaluation of relative success/failure of government responses to issues

• explained what *had been done* or *was intended*, **not** what should be done

• used geographic terminology accurately

• showed a structured, logical sequence of ideas.

Weaker Responses

In these, candidates:

• used prepared answers

• showed a lack of current information

• used inappropriate examples, with over–emphasis on the historical development of a city

• described the roles or functions of cities, ignoring management and government responses

• listed management issues without outlining government responses

• used generalised responses involving management issues not specific to one city only

• included inaccurate information

• tended to discuss what government *should do*, rather than what *is being done* (personal opinions)

• failed to answer the question

• omitted detail.

General Comments

• Inaccurate use of geographic terminology was quite common, eg, gentrification, morphology

• Sydney was the city most commonly studied, but, nevertheless, was not dealt with well

- Too much outdated/inaccurate information was presented

- Some students placed too much emphasis on anecdotal information eg, Rodney King (Los Angeles), 'No Go' zones in London, elderly people in cages (Hong Kong), round park benches being installed to discourage the homeless (Los Angeles) — rather than geographical concepts

- Many concepts were emphasised but not clearly understood, eg, the doughnut effect

- Diagrams, if used, need to be clearly and accurately annotated (scale of maps was often very poor)

- Responses are often dependent on the data provided in class — particularly with regard to case studies. As a consequence, sometimes even very good students performed poorly because they appeared to have had little access to appropriate, up–to–date information.

3 Unit (Additional)

Table 7
The percentage frequency of Option and question selection

Option	Question Number	% Frequency Questions	% Frequency of Option
Biophysical Studies	1	28.23	
	2	43.52	71.76
Development Geography	3	15.04	
	4	8.31	23.36
Political Geography	5	1.63	
	6	3.23	4.87

Option 1   Biophysical Studies.

Question 1

Choose ONE of the four components of the biophysical environment. Account for variations in the behaviour of this component over time and space.

Relationship to the Syllabus Document

(Syllabus document reference: 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 and evaluation of the sensitivity to change.

2   Topic Outcomes examined

• understanding of the natural processes and functioning associated with one of the components of the biophysical environment

• recognition and explanation of rates of change over time and space

3   Subject matter examined

• functioning of the selected component of the biophysical environment in a natural state

• a review of the key processes operating within the component in a natural state

• variation in the behaviour of the component over time and space.

4   Directive terms used

account for

Better Responses

In these, candidates:

• wrote well structured essays comprising scholarly arguments focused on variations of one aspect of the biophysical environment over time and space

• referred to natural/human influences that result in variations

• referred to a wide variety of field/sample studies/statistics to support each statement

• used geographic terminology competently.

Weaker Responses

In these, candidates:

• provided prepared answers that were not related to the question

• gave information that was incorrect, inadequate or very basic

• gave a short/general response with little reference to the four components of the biophysical environment.

• obviously failed to understand the Syllabus Outcome; *variations over space and time*

• gave a descriptive response that reflected their inability to account for variations or made little/no attempt to do so.

General Comments

• This was a fair and straightforward question based on the Syllabus.

• This was a fair question that allowed students to demonstrate and use a variety of illustrative samples.

Question 2

With reference to a major study of ONE environmental issue, identify the forces causing change, and evaluate the sensitivity to disturbance within the component of the biophysical environment you have selected.

Relationship to the Syllabus Document

(Syllabus document reference: pp 48-49)

1 Statements examined

• identification of the forces causing change and evaluation of sensitivity to disturbance within the component of the biophysical environment selected

• major study of an environmental issue emphasising the importance of an understanding of the processes and scale for effective management of change

• major study and adequate inquiry methods.

2 Topic Outcomes examined

• identification of the causes of change and evaluation of the sensitivity to disturbance within the component of the biophysical environment selected

• evaluation of sensitivity to change

• major study and active inquiry methods.

3 Subject matter examined

• a major study of one environmental issue

• a major study of one environmental issue associated primarily with sensitivity to disturbance within the component of the biophysical environment:

  ° identification and explanation of the key processes
  ° the significance of the scale of operation of the key processes affected by human disturbances
  ° the nature of the disturbances and the sensitivity to change within the component

4   Directive terms used

identify, evaluate

Better Responses

In these, candidates:

*   clearly identified an environmental issue as well as a variety of forces, both natural and human, causing change. These students also clearly evaluated the sensitivity to change within the component.

*   referred to a single environmental issue and identified a variety of forces; a number of examples were given and these candidates clearly indicated their understanding of the workings of the environment as well as the specific component related to their issue. A number of examples were given and sensitivity to disturbance within the selected component was clearly evaluated.

Weaker Responses

In these, candidates:

*   did not clearly state the specific environmental issue. Their descriptions of forces causing change were very general, and, often, either no attempt or a very poor attempt was made to discuss sensitivity to disturbance. Many weaker responses were prepared answers dealing with environmental case studies.

*   failed to deal with a single environmental issue and/or place it within one of the components of the biophysical environment. The forces causing change were poorly discussed. Often an environmental case study or fragile ecosystem was used without attempting to deal with the question. The weaker responses usually failed to mention sensitivity, or only implied it.

General Comments

*   Most candidates made a good attempt at answering this question, covering a range of issues from a variety of *spheres* and including a wealth of factual geographic knowledge; moreover, many essays were improved by the use of relevant diagrams. Many students, however, who used a fragile ecosystem, management or environmental case study failed to apply their wide geographic knowledge to the question.

Option 2   Development Geography.

Question 3

Using sample studies, analyse the internal forces that influence the different levels and rates of development of nations.

Relationship to the Syllabus Document

(Syllabus document reference: pp 50-51)

1   Statements examined

- investigation of patterns, rates and impacts of development

- analysis of the economic, technological, social, cultural, political and biophysical forces that contribute to different levels and rates of development

- sample studies and active inquiry methodologies

2   Topic Outcomes examined

- explanation of how development reflects the interaction of forces arising from within and outside a nation

- explanation of different levels and rates of development resulting from a range of economic, technological, social, cultural, political and biophysical factors

- use of active inquiry methods and sample studies to illustrate knowledge and skills learned.

3   Subject matter examined

- Patterns of development on a global scale:
  use of indicators to illustrate spatial variations in the levels and rates of development

- Rates of development:
  Economic, technological, social, cultural, political and biophysical forces contributing to the rate of development, including the role of:

  ° internal forces in influencing development, such as political systems and planning, social structures, cultural attitudes, health, education, transport and other infrastructure, population change, availability of natural resources, internal capital formation and environmental quality.

4   Directive terms used

analyse

Better Responses

In these, candidates:

- were clearly able to identify a number of forces, linking them to the different levels and rates of development of various nations. They used a range of sample studies — their depth of understanding was enhanced by the use of relevant statistics and data. Their approach was analytical and some stated both positive and negative aspects of different forces.

Weaker Responses

- tended to be more descriptive, comprising an outline of internal forces or only implied linkages between forces, rates and levels. Poor use of sample studies was made, with many simply giving short examples. Some compared less developed countries and developed countries as a group of nations instead of providing sample studies. Generally no reference was made to any rate of development.

General Comment

- Some students seemed unable to understand directive terms eg, *analyse*. Generally their answers were very long and some showed a depth of knowledge based on wide reading.

Question 4

Evaluate the appropriateness of quantitative and qualitative indicators as measures of development.

Relationship to the Syllabus Document

(Syllabus document reference: pp 50-51)

1 Statement(s) examined

- investigation of contemporary geographical issues arising from development.

2 Topic Outcomes examined

- description and account of the nature and spatial distribution of development on a global scale

- analysis of a variety of contemporary geographical issues related to development

- use of active inquiry methods and sample studies to illustrate knowledge and skills learned.

3 Subject matter examined

Patterns of development on 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

4 Directive terms used

evaluate

Better Responses

In these, candidates:

* identified and evaluated a wide variety of both qualitative and quantitative indicators

* used sample studies and statistics to support their arguments in explaining why indicators were weak or strong

* commented not only on individual indicators, but evaluated qualitative indicators (as a whole) and quantitative indicators (as a whole)

* identified the need to use both types of indicators to measure development

* recognised the *value–based* nature of the word *appropriate* and used case studies to show how some indicators may be misleading.

Weaker Responses

In these, candidates:

* failed to evaluate indicators and only described each indicator.

* appeared confused over the difference between qualitative and quantitative indicators.

* frequently showed a marked imbalance between the coverage of qualitative and quantitative indicators. Many students were unsure of how qualitative indicators are formulated and expressed.

* submitted *prepared responses* in many cases. Almost all of these responses missed the subtleties and much of the information that was both expected and required to excel in this question.

* confused *continents* (Africa) with *countries* — many presented no real geography in their answers.

General Comments

* This question gave students the opportunity to explore *types of development* or *uneven development*. The better students used these aspects well and combined them with indicators to show appropriateness. Many, however, did not recognise the link between different sections of the Syllabus and this depressed the mark awarded them.

* When students study concepts or principles, they also really study or assess how these operate in a range of case studies, which they examine in depth and individually — not just by country name. Fuller integration of the requirements of the Syllabus is needed within the sample studies.

Option 3   Political Geography.

Question 5

Using sample studies, analyse the various paths taken toward conflict resolution at a variety of scales.

Relationship to the Syllabus Document

(Syllabus document reference: pp 52-53)

1   Statements examined

- investigation of means by which tensions and conflicts are resolved

- analysis of the causes of political tensions and conflicts on a variety of scales

- examination of geographic consequences of political tensions and conflicts for communities, regions and nations

- sample studies and active inquiry methods.

2   Topic Outcomes examined

- analysis of the different paths taken towards conflict resolution and the resulting outcomes

- use of active inquiry methods and sample studies to illustrate knowledge and skills learned.

3   Subject matter examined

Resolution of political conflicts:

- various paths towards conflict resolution at a variety of scales such as international alliances, intervention by international agencies, partitions, political and judicial interventions and local community initiatives

- sample studies.

4   Directive terms used

analyse

Better Responses

In these, candidates:

- appreciated the complexity of many political conflicts and were therefore able to recognise the fact that a number of paths towards resolution in any one conflict are usually attempted. In these answers candidates did not merely describe resolution paths, but also analysed the merits of various paths. Often such an analysis required an initial explanation of the circumstances of the conflict so that the appropriateness of the paths could be reflected upon intelligently.

- were well drilled in the use of the language and concepts of scales, paths and resolution and were able to present interesting and thought-provoking responses.

Weaker Responses

In these, candidates:

- usually failed to analyse the question, presenting, instead, a descriptive account of a number of conflicts. In such responses candidates focused on the events of the conflict rather than the paths to resolution. Those answers that attempted to deal with the question of resolution paths were often very simple and tended to present each conflict as being solved by a single path which was either successful or not. Here conflict resolution was not dealt with on the full breadth of scales and often merely used examples as illustrations, rather than presenting a deeper analysis through more detailed sample studies.

General Comments

- Whilst all students need to be prepared, a *prepared answer* generally does not score well as it rarely deals with all aspects of the question.

- Students need to be able to account for/explain events or decisions within the framework of their sample studies.

- Treatment of issues at the local scale should also be detailed; many responses lacked the detail or level of analysis found at other scales.

- Students must learn to recognise the difference between a sample study and an example, since the former allows greater depth and analysis.

Question 6

Evaluate the impacts of political tensions and conflicts on people and environments.

Relationship to the Syllabus Document

(Syllabus document reference: pp 52-53)

1   Statement(s) examined

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

- examination of geographic consequences of political tensions and conflicts for communities, regions and nations

2   Topic Outcomes examined

- explanation of geographical impacts of political tensions and conflicts

- use of active inquiry methods and sample studies to illustrate their knowledge and skills.

3   Subject matter examined

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

Reference should be made to a sample study.

4   Directive terms used

evaluate

Better Responses

In these, candidates:

- were able to deal with all aspects of the question.

- understood the term *evaluate*, as well as political tensions and conflicts.

- identified the impacts of tensions and conflicts, but were able, also, to review their consequences, eg, costs/benefits; long term effects etc.

- used a range of sample studies to illustrate impacts and to evaluate them.

Weaker Responses

In these, candidates:

- often gave an historical account of political tensions and conflicts.

- gave very basic descriptions of sample studies (*little stories*).

- tended to accentuate causes rather than impacts.

- made little reference to impacts on people and the environment.

- used sample studies that were either not suited to or were misinterpreted for use in this question (eg, natural response/ecosystem–style sample studies).

General Comment

- Very little use was made of maps, diagrams and other geographic methods.

- Few could deal with the complex nature of the question which referred to:

  evaluation, impacts and *people and environments*.

- Although the question did not ask for sample studies, those who did not use them tended to generalise and scored poorly .

- Many candidates wrote long responses that were often prepared answers covering all elements of the Syllabus.