2004 HSC Notes from the Marking Centre Geography

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2004 HSC NOTES FROM THE MARKING CENTRE GEOGRAPHY

Introduction

This document has been produced for the teachers and candidates of the Stage 6 course in Geography. It provides comments with regard to responses to the 2004 Higher School Certificate Examination, indicating the quality of student responses and highlighting the relative strengths and weaknesses of the candidature in each section and each question.

It is essential for this document to be read in conjunction with the relevant syllabus, the 2004 Higher School Certificate Examination, the Marking Guidelines and other support documents which have been developed by the Board of Studies to assist in the teaching and learning of Geography.

General Comments

In 2004, 4373 candidates attempted the Geography examination.

Each year, several issues relating to the paper emerge as significant to the markers.

Firstly, there appears to be a need to reinforce the differences in directive terms, both in the short-answer and extended response questions. While most terms were better handled than in previous years, the term 'assess' caused difficulties for a large number of candidates this year. Candidates cannot address the set question if they do not understand what the question requires them to do.

Secondly, there appears to be a strong need for practice and revision in the range of geographical skills outlined in the syllabus. Candidates need practice in dealing with a wide range of stimulus material, including topographic maps, transects and cross-sections, photographs, synoptic charts, graphs and statistics. These skills and tools need to be integrated into each of the three topic areas and applied in a range of question types. Special attention is required regarding accuracy of measurements and calculations and the use of correct units of measurement.

Thirdly, when studying any of the three major topics, the selection of case studies needs to be carefully considered to ensure that candidates can access all parts of the syllabus. Textbook material should be supplemented with current information such as newspaper articles and appropriate on-line sources. In some centres, it is obvious that candidates have been set research tasks as each one presents a different case study. In many of these cases, the candidate is disadvantaged by poor choice or inadequate information. While these projects are to be encouraged, they require close supervision to ensure all points in the syllabus can be covered by the material collected.

Finally, candidates should be encouraged to utilise relevant maps, diagrams and fieldwork wherever appropriate. This helps to individualise their responses and highlights skills other than writing.

All questions in the Geography examination are compulsory.

Section I – Multiple Choice

General Comments

A wide range of skills and outcomes was examined in the 15 compulsory multiple choice questions. These questions allowed access to all candidates. They were derived from the three HSC course topics as well as from the skills required throughout the course.

Question	Correct Response
1	A
2	D
3	C
4	D
5	B
6	C
7	B
8	A

Question	Correct Response
9	D
10	C
11	D
12	B
13	C
14	B
15	D

Section II – Short-answer Responses

General Comments

Candidates should be mindful of the marks allocated and the space provided for each part of the short-answer responses. As the examination paper suggests, about 45 minutes should be allocated to this section. Writing in excess of the allocated space is not only unnecessary to achieve full marks but can detract from time needed to adequately answer subsequent questions. The need for quality and not quantity still needs to be reinforced.

Question 16

Practice in all skills related to the interpretation of topographic mapping is essential. Candidates need to differentiate between cross sections and transects and should be encouraged to actually draw a line on their topographic map in an examination to assist in identification of features along a transect. Exposure to a variety of topographic maps would be an advantage - different scales, legends and ages/dates.

If a question asks for one feature, there is no advantage to be gained by giving two or more. If the question asks for two features, giving four is a waste of time.

(a)   Strengths:
- Candidates understood the concept of vertical exaggeration.
- Calculations of vertical exaggeration were made and expressed accurately.

Weaknesses:
- Many candidates expressed vertical exaggeration as a ratio or a fraction.
- Some candidates gave incorrect answers due to their inability to convert measurements to the same units, eg to centimetres or metres.
- Some candidates showed the correct formula but calculated the mathematics incorrectly.

(b)   Strengths:
- Candidates correctly identified the transect and land uses along it.
- Answers were succinct and related to changes in land use.
- Candidates recognised and named two changes as the question required.

Weaknesses:
- Land uses identified were not located along the transect.
- Candidates confused land use with landform.

(c)   Strengths:
- Candidates understood the term 'biophysical' and provided an explanation of how biophysical factors impacted on urban development.
- The correct quadrant of the map was identified.

Weaknesses:
- Candidates gave reasons for the urban growth not related to the map.
- Some candidates misunderstood the question and gave the effects of urban growth on the biophysical environment

(d)   Strengths:
- Candidates were able to identify a change in flow from intermittent to permanent between Ross River Dam and Black Weir.
- The cause of the change was identified as the need to regulate water supply.

Weaknesses:
- Some candidates did not understand that coastal rivers flow to the sea. Many had the river flowing the wrong way.
- Some candidates concentrated on the effects of dam construction on the ecosystem instead of on river flow, as the question required.

Question 17

Candidates are reminded that full marks can be attained by using the lines provided for each question. Many candidates are using far more space to no advantage. Writing more than is necessary reduces the time available for subsequent responses and therefore may disadvantage the candidate. It is important to answer the set question.

(a)   Strengths:
- Candidates provided detailed characteristics and features of world cities as centres of economic authority.
- Examples were relevant and well supported.
- Examples came from Source A as well as the candidate's knowledge of the subject.
- Candidates wrote succinctly and used only the space provided.

Weaknesses:
- Responses contained a vague discussion of the role of world cities.
- Responses failed to refer to Source A or gave incorrect references.
- Candidates listed economic and/or cultural roles of world cities.

(b) Strengths:
- Better responses described relationships well and referred to the dominance and dependence of world cities.
- Better responses also linked the operation of global networks to changes evident in the stimulus material.
- Candidates used key words and geographical terminology.

Weaknesses:
- Relationships were not outlined.
- Candidates listed or described changes in technology, transport and communication without linking them to the operation of networks.
- Responses concentrated on irrelevant information such as globalisation with no reference to the stimulus material.

Question 18

(a) Strengths:
- Better responses recognised that the natural stress event was catastrophic (ie that soils and animal species were removed) eg a volcano, earthquake.

Weaknesses:
- Some candidates were unable to recognise that the event was catastrophic.
- References were to human stresses rather than natural ones.

(b) Strengths:
- Better responses applied their knowledge and used geographical terminology, eg nutrient cycling, serial progression, climax communities.
- Better responses used the diagram and recognised interrelationships in three parts: plants, soils and animals.

Weaknesses:
- Weaker responses did not refer to the diagram.
- Generalised responses about the ecosystem before and after the event failed to link the features in the diagram, or to address evolutionary processes and functioning.
- Some candidates failed to recognise that the ecosystem recovered.

(c) Strengths:
- Candidates clearly identified a factor (eg biodiversity, location, linkages, extent) which affects the vulnerability and resilience of ecosystems.
- Relevant examples and case studies were used.

Weaknesses:
- Human and/or natural impacts were described rather than the factors which make an ecosystem vulnerable to human/natural impact.
- Some candidates were confused about the causes of vulnerability.
- More emphasis needed to be placed on ecosystem functioning.

(d) This question was generally very well answered.

Strengths:
- Responses identified a traditional strategy/management practice and acknowledged its effectiveness in ecosystem sustainability.
- Links between the strategy and indigenous groups were made.
- Better responses used examples and illustrative case studies.

Weaknesses:
- Many candidates wrote about contemporary management strategies instead of traditional ones.
- Irrelevant material, such as the philosophies of management, was treated instead of addressing the set question.
- Some candidates ignored the second part of the question about the effectiveness of the chosen strategy.

Section III – Extended Responses

General Comments

Candidates need to be reminded that they should address the rubric as well as the set question when attempting extended response questions. There are three important steps required in their planning of each extended response. The directive terms in the question and all the key requirements of the question must be considered. Candidates also need to understand which parts of the syllabus are being examined in terms of geographical information, ideas and/or issues. Appropriate case studies and illustrative examples need to be used to give relevance to the geographical information. Candidates need to remember that the Stimulus Booklet may provide useful information and/or illustrative material for use in a variety of their responses.

Each section of the examination paper includes suggested times and candidates should be encouraged to remain within these time limits so as to maximise their potential marks in all sections.

Candidates appear to have a better understanding of most lower order directive terms from the glossary. However, the term 'assess' is still frequently misunderstood or badly handled. Candidates need to understand that a judgement should be made and this must be supported and/or justified by facts, statistics and/or other relevant information and examples.

Question 19

Strengths:
- Better responses were aware of the glossary directive terms and clearly tried to describe and analyse.
- Candidates could accurately describe the spatial pattern of their ecosystem, often using a map.
- Candidates addressed all parts of the question, including the dimensions of the ecosystem at risk. These candidates realised the importance of the dimensions of the ecosystem and described the dimensions in terms of those which were appropriate to their case study such as location, altitude, latitude, size, shape and continuity.
- Better responses demonstrated a clear understanding of the ecosystem functioning and therefore could relate the negative human impacts to their results and implications for the ecosystem at risk.
- Responses used an ecosystem that they could clearly identify and which was large enough to show dimensions and negative impacts.
- Both global and local negative human impacts were recognised.
- Appropriate examples were used to support and illustrate responses.

Weaknesses:
- Many candidates did not understand how to analyse an issue.
- Responses identified a place, country or region rather than an ecosystem.
- Many candidates ignored some aspects of the set question, eg dimensions, or demonstrated limited or inaccurate understanding of this aspect of the question.
- Some candidates focussed on management strategies and/or reasons for protection and did not link these factors to negative impacts and results.
- Others found it difficult to identify human impacts and could not relate these to the results and implications that such impacts would have on the ecosystem at risk.
- Ecosystem functioning was poorly understood by some candidates.

Question 20

Strengths:
- Candidates demonstrated a strong understanding of the economic character of large cities.
- There was also sound understanding of the relationships between a range of urban dynamics and the changing economic character of large cities.
- Responses demonstrated good spatial knowledge of the chosen cities.
- Candidates emphasised change and used examples of change over time, eg industrial, residential, commercial land use zones.
- Relevant maps, graphs and diagrams were integrated and used effectively.
- Better responses were well-structured, sequential, succinct and factual.

Weaknesses:
- Some candidates showed little, or incorrect, understanding of a large city in the developed world.
- In some responses, there was no mention of a specific city.
- Responses with narrow spatial knowledge of a city, or which use a suburb or district within a city, generally score less marks as they lack the depth and breadth of better responses.
- Weaker responses failed to demonstrate an understanding of the economic character of a large city. Many interpreted 'economic character' as social advantages and disadvantages.
- Lists of definitions of urban dynamics are inadequate to answer this question.

Question 21

Strengths:
- Better responses showed a clear understanding of social, economic and environmental factors.
- The economic activity was constantly referred to and examples from around the globe were used.
- Candidates understood the directive term 'assess' and provided reasoned judgements about the positive and negative impacts of the economic activity in all three areas (economic, social and environmental).
- Rather than a single case study, numerous examples and samples were used.
- Responses were well-structured and showed good use of geographical terminology.

Weaknesses:
- Candidates could not distinguish between an economic activity and an economic enterprise. Many used a local enterprise to answer a global question.
- Candidates misinterpreted the question and focussed on the social, economic and environmental impacts ON the activity rather than OF the activity and hence did not answer the set question.
- Others focussed on factors of influence (technological, political, biophysical) on the activity.
- Weaker responses provided limited or no assessment of the impacts and simply described the impacts.
- The use of inappropriate examples of economic activity limits the marks achievable.
- There was limited use of global examples.
- There was a large number of short responses and non-attempts due to candidates mismanaging their time and leaving themselves short of time for this last question.

Geography
2004 HSC Examination Mapping Grid

Question	Marks	Content	Syllabus outcomes
Section I			
1	1	Skills and tools	H10, H11, H12
2	1	Skills and tools	H10, H11, H12
3	1	Skills and tools	H10, H11, H12
4	1	Urban places	H10, H11, H12
5	1	Skills and tools	H10, H11, H12
6	1	Skills and tools	H10, H11, H12
7	1	Skills and tools	H10, H11, H12
8	1	Skills and tools	H10, H11, H12
9	1	Skills and tools	H10, H11, H12
10	1	Skills and tools	H10, H11, H12
11	1	Skills and tools	H10, H11, H12
12	1	Skills and tools	H10, H11, H12
13	1	Skills and tools	H10, H11, H12
14	1	Skills and tools	H10, H11, H12
15	1	Skills and tools	H10, H11, H12
Section II			
16 (a)	1	Skills and tools	H11
16 (b)	1	Skills and tools – change	H10
16 (c)	2	Skills and tools – dot point 5, 6	H10, H13
16 (d)	3	Skills and tools – dot point 5, 6	H10, H12, H13
17 (a)	4	World Cities – dot point 2	H10, H12, H13
17 (b)	4	World Cities – dot point 3	H10, H12, H13
18 (a)	1	Ecosystems and their management – natural stress	H2, H10
18 (b)	3	Ecosystems and their management – biophysical interactions	H1, H10, H13
18 (c)	3	Ecosystems and their management – vulnerability and resilience of ecosystems	H2, H13
18 (d)	3	Ecosystems and their management – evolution of traditional strategy or practice	H5, H12, H13
Section III			
19	20	Ecosystems at risk – case studies of ecosystems	H1, H2, H6, H12, H13
20	20	Urban places – urban dynamics	H1, H3, H12, H13
21	20	People and economic activity – global economic activity	H1, H4, H6, H12, H13

2004 HSC Geography Marking Guidelines

Section II

Question 16 (a)

Outcomes assessed: H11

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
• 12.5 or 12.5 times or 12.5 ×	1

Question 16 (b)

Outcomes assessed: H10

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
• Recognises and names TWO correct changes	1

Question 16 (c)

Outcomes assessed: H10, H13

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
• Sketches in general terms ONE biophysical reason for a change in urban development since 1968 in the NW quadrant	2
• Identifies ONE biophysical reason for a change in urban development since 1968 in the NW quadrant OR • Indicates the main features of ONE change in the NW quadrant	1

Question 16 (d)

Outcomes assessed: H10, H12, H13

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
• Names ONE correct change to the flow of the Ross River since 1968 • Relates the cause of the change to its effect on the river	3
• Names ONE correct change to the flow of the Ross River since 1968 • States the cause of the change without reference to its effect on the river	2
• Names ONE correct change OR • States a cause	1

Question 17 (a)

Outcomes assessed: H10, H12, H13

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
• Provides characteristics and features of the role of world cities as centres of economic authority in some detail AND • Supports this description with a range of accurate examples from Source A	3–4
• Provides some characteristics and features of the role of world cities as centres of economic authority and gives accurate examples from Source A OR • Provides detailed characteristics and features of role of world cities as centres of economic authority without examples from Source A. OR • Provides detailed characteristics and features of the role of world cities as centres of cultural authority using accurate examples from Source A	1–2

Question 17 (b)

Outcomes assessed: H10, H12, H13

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
• Links the operation of global networks to the changes evident in the stimulus AND • Provides characteristics and features of the global networks of world cities	3–4
• Attempts to link the operation of global networks to some changes evident in the stimulus OR • Provides characteristics and features of global networks of world cities OR • Identifies the changes evident in the stimulus	1–2

Question 18 (a)

Outcomes assessed: H2, H10

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
• Recognises and names ONE natural stress	1

Question 18 (b)

Outcomes assessed: H1, H10, H13

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
• Provides characteristics and features of changes in the functioning of the ecosystem making clear reference to linkages evident in the diagram	3
• Provides some characteristics/features of changes in the functioning of the ecosystem with some reference to linkages evident	2
• Identifies changes in vegetation and/or soil depth and/or animal species with reference to the diagram OR • Describes characteristics of changes in the functioning of ecosystems without reference to the diagram	1

Question 18 (c)

Outcomes assessed: H2, H13

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
• Names and provides characteristics and features of ONE factor in some detail that affects the vulnerability and resilience of ecosystems	3
• Names and provides some characteristics of ONE factor that affects the vulnerability and resilience of ecosystems OR • Provides characteristics and features of human impacts/natural impacts	2
• Names ONE or more factors that affect the vulnerability and resilience of ecosystems with no description OR • Provides some features of human impacts/natural impacts	1

Question 18 (d)

Outcomes assessed: H5, H12, H13

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
• Names ONE traditional management strategy or practice • Provides reason/s to support this strategy/practice in terms of its effectiveness for ecosystem management	3
• Names ONE traditional management strategy/practice • Provides a general description of the strategy/practice	2
• Names ONE traditional management strategy/practice OR • Provides a general description of a strategy/practice OR • Names one contemporary strategy and provides reasons to support this strategy/practice in terms of its effectiveness for ecosystem management	1

Section II

Question 19

Outcomes assessed: H1, H2, H6, H12, H13

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
• Provides appropriate features of the spatial pattern(s) and dimensions relating to ONE case study of an ecosystem at risk • Demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the negative impacts, results and implications of human activity on the ecosystem at risk • Presents a sustained, logical and well structured answer that uses specific geographical information, ideas and issues	17–20
• Provides general features of the spatial pattern(s) and dimensions relating to ONE case study of an ecosystem at risk • Demonstrates a clear understanding of negative impacts, results implications of human activity on the ecosystem at risk • Presents a structured answer that uses appropriate geographical information, ideas and issues	13–16
• Provides general features of the spatial pattern(s) and/or dimensions relating to ONE case study of an ecosystem at risk • Recognises negative impacts, results and implications of human activity on the ecosystem at risk • Presents appropriate geographical information, ideas and issues	9–12
• Provides limited features of the spatial pattern(s) and/or dimensions relating to ONE case study of an ecosystem at risk • Outlines some impacts of human activity on the ecosystem at risk • Presents some geographical information, ideas and issues	5–8
• Demonstrates limited knowledge of the spatial pattern(s) and/or dimensions and/or impacts of human activity on the ecosystem at risk • Limited use of geographical information, ideas and issues	1–4

Question 20

Outcomes assessed: H1, H3, H12, H13

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
• Demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of various urban dynamics of a large city in the developed world • Comprehensively demonstrates relationships between various urban dynamics and the changing economic character of a large city in the developed world • Presents a sustained, logical and well structured answer that uses specific geographical information, ideas and issues	17–20
• Demonstrates an understanding of various urban dynamics of a large city in the developed world • Demonstrates the relationships between various urban dynamics and the changing economic character of a large city in the developed world • Presents a structured answer that uses appropriate geographical information, ideas and issues	13–16
• Demonstrates some understanding of one or more urban dynamics and the changing economic character of a large city in the developed world • Presents an answer that uses appropriate geographical information, ideas and issues	9–12
• Demonstrates some understanding of urban dynamics and/or the economic character of a large city in the developed world • Presents some geographical information, ideas and issues	5–8
• Demonstrates limited knowledge of urban dynamics or the economic character of a large city in the developed world • Limited use of geographical information, ideas and issues	1–4

Question 21

Outcomes assessed: H1, H4, H6, H12, H13

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
• Provides reasoned judgements as to the nature and extent of the environmental, social and economic impacts of one economic activity in a global context • Refers to a variety of appropriate case studies and/or illustrative examples • Presents a sustained, logical and well structured answer that uses specific geographical information, ideas and issues	17–20
• Provides judgements as to the nature and extent of the environmental, social and economic impacts of one economic activity in a global context • Refers to appropriate case studies and/or illustrative examples • Presents a structured answer that uses appropriate geographical information, ideas and issues	13–16
• Describes in detail the environmental, social and economic impacts of one economic activity in a global context • May refer to case studies and/or examples • Presents an answer that uses appropriate geographical information, ideas and issues	9–12
• Describes the environmental, social and economic impacts of one economic activity in a global context OR • Describes environmental or social or economic impacts of one economic activity in a global context in some detail OR • Describes the impact of environmental, economic and social factors on an activity • Uses an economic enterprise rather than an economic activity • Presents some geographical information, ideas and issues	5–8
• Demonstrates limited knowledge about the environmental and/or social and/or economic impacts of an economic activity • Limited use of geographical information, ideas and issues	1–4