

**2008 HSC Notes from  
the Marking Centre  
Geography**

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# 2008 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 contains comments on candidate responses to the 2008 Higher School Certificate examination, indicating the quality of the responses and highlighting their relative strengths and weaknesses.

This document should be read along with the relevant syllabus, the 2008 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 2008, 4507 candidates attempted the Geography examination.

There was a high standard of written responses, demonstrating high levels of geographic knowledge and understanding presented in well-reasoned and well-structured answers.

Teachers are reminded that pages 16 and 17 of the syllabus outline the geographical skills and tools, including fieldwork skills, which must be covered during the Stage 6 course.

Candidates need to be familiar with the Board's Glossary of Key Words ([www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/syllabus\\_hsc/glossary\\_keywords.html](http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/syllabus_hsc/glossary_keywords.html)) but they should also be aware that questions will not always start with any key word from the glossary. Questions such as 'how?', 'why?' or 'to what extent?' may be asked, or verbs which are not included in the glossary may be used, for example 'design', 'translate' or 'list'.

Candidates should address the rubric as well as the set question when attempting extended response questions. Appropriate case studies and/or examples need to be used to illustrate or 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. Candidates should be encouraged to remain within these time limits so as to maximise their potential marks in all sections.

**Section I – Multiple Choice**

Question	Correct Response
1	D
2	D
3	C
4	A
5	B
6	B
7	A
8	C
9	A
10	D
11	B
12	C
13	B
14	C
15	A

**Section II****General Comments**

Most candidates were mindful of the marks allocated and used only the space provided for each part of the short-answer responses. As the instructions on the front page of the examination paper suggest, 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**

- (a) In better responses, candidates demonstrated a knowledge and understanding of the concepts of vulnerability, resilience and natural stress in relation to ecosystems and were able to apply this knowledge and understanding to the English estuary ecosystem presented in Source D of the Stimulus Booklet. These responses made specific reference to several components of the ecosystem and identified sources of natural stress, providing illustrative examples. These responses addressed specifically the directive term *how* by explaining the impacts in terms of vulnerability and resilience.

In weaker responses, candidates did not refer to the ecosystem shown in the stimulus material. Many simply defined the terms or described the ecosystem without examining natural stress or merely listed a number of stresses. The weaker responses were confused in their understanding and use of the terms *vulnerability* and *resilience*.

- (b) In better responses, candidates were able to articulate specific human-induced modifications, such as the effect of run-off from neighbouring land uses leading to eutrophication, and then explain the likely impacts such as changes to the oxygen and nutrient levels leading to a

reduction of plant and eventually animal and bird species. Such responses linked the components of the given ecosystem and the impacts of the human-induced modifications.

Weaker responses used the term *human induced modification/s* without providing specific examples or making reference to the stimulus material. A number of these candidates merely listed some general environmental problems unrelated to the stimulus material.

### Question 17

- (a) In the better responses, candidates examined more than one technological factor and their effects on future directions of a specific global economic activity (GEA). Deeper knowledge and understanding of the changes occurring in the GEA was demonstrated by the use of specific examples and by reference to statistics and current technologies, trends and events.

Weaker responses confused the GEA with an economic enterprise, only described one technological factor, only described future directions of a GEA and/or relied on generalisations regarding future directions.

- (b) In the better responses, candidates addressed all parts of the question in the global context, using specific examples to show how political and sociocultural factors both affected the spatial patterns of the named GEA. Specific places/regions were examined.

Weaker responses confused political factors and sociocultural factors with economic factors. They described factors without showing their impact on spatial patterns, or were limited in their depth of explanation by their choice of illustrative examples.

### Question 18

- (a) Better responses demonstrated a clear understanding of the nature of *mega cities in the developing world* and correctly identified examples of such cities. At least two challenges for people living in mega cities in the developing world were described in detail, showing their characteristics and features.

Weaker responses made broad statements about living in mega cities or cities in general, or only listed some challenges without providing details or specific examples. These responses did not distinguish between challenges of living in mega cities and features of mega cities.

- (b) In the better answers, candidates gave a detailed explanation of a response by people living in mega cities. Approaches included examination of both positive responses, such as local community programs, and negative responses such as the growth of the informal sector. These answers provided specific examples of programs and projects operating in specific places, often supported by statistical information. Both *why* and *how* were addressed.

Many of the weaker answers showed a lack of understanding of *mega cities*. Answers were generalised, often only implying a challenge and not clearly stating who or what was responsible for making the response.

## Section III

### Question 19

In better responses, candidates demonstrated a sound knowledge and understanding of the operation of urban dynamics in a large city of the developed world. They correctly identified at least two urban dynamics operating in an appropriate example of a large city and identified and explained causal links and showed impacts. The analysis of the impacts drew upon illustrative examples of a variety of suburbs within the city. Better answers showed links between urban dynamics such as urban decay and renewal, including the suburbanisation of people and work resulting in decay in inner suburbs. Better responses successfully identified the impacts of urban dynamics as changes in the social structure, patterns of ethnicity, changing economic character, culture of place etc. The better responses supported conclusions with statistics, maps and diagrams and expressed arguments fluently using appropriate geographic terminology.

Weaker responses used inappropriate cities or suburbs. This choice meant that the candidate was not able to fully respond to the question and was restricted to the discussion of a small number of dynamics and their impacts. This type of focus also prevented an analysis of the operation of the dynamic across the whole city. The weaker responses often indicated a limited spatial knowledge of the selected city and of the linkages between the urban dynamics of change. Language tended to be descriptive and lacked the use of appropriate geographic terminology.

### Question 20

In better responses, candidates had a clear understanding of the term *compare* – to show similarities and differences within and between two different ecosystems at risk. These responses described the nature of change in terms of natural or human-induced change and discussed the rate of change as gradual/catastrophic, in some cases identifying the time frames. Candidates outlined the characteristics of the ecosystem types (biomes) and gave specific locations where these were found, for example coral reef ecosystems of the Great Barrier Reef or rainforest ecosystems of the Daintree region. Depth of knowledge was shown by outlining the effect of change on the functioning of the ecosystems, such as increased hunting of herbivores leading to increased biomass of grass. Better answers demonstrated similar confidence in examining both ecosystems, often with reference to fieldwork. Clear comparisons were made between the two ecosystems in terms of specific features of their nature, rate of change and functioning. In this, contrasting ecosystems allowed for clearer, plainer comparisons. Better responses supported the discussion with statistics, maps and diagrams and used appropriate geographic terminology.

In weaker responses, candidates either did not understand the term *compare* or examined one ecosystem only. The weaker responses were generally descriptive and lacked the depth of knowledge required to make meaningful comparisons. In some cases ecosystem types were discussed with no illustrative examples. This limited the ability to provide detailed comparisons.

### Question 21

Better responses displayed a deep knowledge and understanding of a global economic activity and an associated local economic activity. They clearly and in detail explained the cause and effect between global changes and the various linkages and flows associated with a local economic enterprise. Case studies were fully utilised and appropriate statistics, maps and diagrams were used to support the discussion. The better responses dealt with the linkages and flows of people, services

and ideas in a detailed manner showing a knowledge and understanding of each and how they relate to both the activity and the enterprise, making a clear connection between global change and its impact on specific linkages. Such answers presented an integrated discussion which was coherent and well planned and used appropriate geographic terminology.

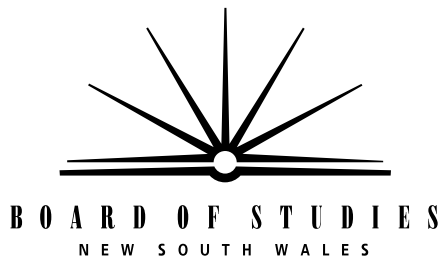
Weaker responses tended to be descriptive, lacking depth and detail, with limited use of appropriate geographic terminology. Although referring to a case study, a number of responses were inappropriate and unrelated to the global changes of the activity. Alternatively, in other responses, discussion was restricted to the global changes occurring in the activity.



# Geography

## 2008 HSC Examination Mapping Grid

Question	Marks	Content	Syllabus outcomes
<b>Section I</b>			
1	1	Geographical tools and skills	H10, H11
2	1	Geographical tools and skills	H10, H11
3	1	Geographical tools and skills	H10, H11
4	1	Geographical tools and skills	H10, H11
5	1	Geographical tools and skills	H10, H11
6	1	Geographical tools and skills	H10, H11
7	1	Geographical tools and skills	H10, H11
8	1	Geographical tools and skills	H10
9	1	Geographical tools and skills	H10
10	1	Geographical tools and skills	H10, H11
11	1	Geographical tools and skills	H10, H11
12	1	Geographical tools and skills	H10, H11
13	1	Geographical tools and skills	H10, H11
14	1	Geographical tools and skills	H10, H11
15	1	Geographical tools and skills	H10, H11
<b>Section II</b>			
16 (a)	4	Ecosystems at risk Geographical tools and skills	H2, H10
16 (b)	4	Ecosystems at risk Geographical tools and skills	H2, H10, H12
17 (a)	3	People and Economic Activity	H1, H12
17 (b)	5	People and Economic Activity	H1, H4
18 (a)	4	Urban Places Geographical tools and skills	H12
18 (b)	5	Urban Places Geographical tools and skills	H6, H12
<b>Section III</b>			
19	20	Urban Places	H1, H3, H12, H13
20	20	Ecosystems at risk	H2, H12, H13
21	20	People and economic activity	H4, H6, H12, H13



## **2008 HSC Geography Marking Guidelines**

The following marking guidelines were developed by the examination committee for the 2008 HSC examination in Geography, and were used at the marking centre in marking student responses. For each question the marking guidelines are contained in a table showing the criteria associated with each mark or mark range.

The information in the marking guidelines is further supplemented as required by the Supervisor of Marking and the senior markers at the marking centre.

A range of different organisations produce booklets of sample answers for HSC examinations, and other notes for students and teachers. The Board of Studies does not attest to the correctness or suitability of the answers, sample responses or explanations provided. Nevertheless, many students and teachers have found such publications to be useful in their preparation for the HSC examinations.

A copy of the Mapping Grid, which maps each question in the examination to course outcomes and content as detailed in the syllabus, is also included.

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## 2008 HSC Geography Marking Guidelines

### Section II

#### Question 16 (a)

*Outcomes assessed: H2, H10*

#### MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With reference to the source, correctly accounts for BOTH the vulnerability and resilience of the ecosystem</li> </ul>	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With reference to the source, correctly accounts for EITHER vulnerability or resilience of the ecosystem</li> </ul>	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides a general description of the vulnerability and/or resilience of the ecosystem</li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides a general description of vulnerability and/or resilience</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates limited knowledge of ecosystems</li> </ul>	1

**Question 16 (b)***Outcomes assessed: H2, H10, H12***MARKING GUIDELINES**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Marks</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>With reference to the source, provides a range of appropriate human induced modifications and their likely impacts on the ecosystem</li></ul>	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>With reference to the source, describes some suggestions of human induced modifications and their likely impacts on the ecosystem</li></ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>With reference to the source, provides a detailed explanation of ONE human induced modification and its likely impact on the ecosystem</li></ul>	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Provides limited suggestion/s of impact/s on an ecosystem following human induced modifications</li></ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Provides a general statement about impacts on the ecosystem</li></ul>	1

**Question 17 (a)***Outcomes assessed: H1, H12***MARKING GUIDELINES**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Marks</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Provides detailed reasons showing how technological factors have affected the future directions of one global economic activity</li></ul>	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Provides general reasons showing how technological factors have affected the future directions of one global economic activity</li></ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Provides detailed reasons showing how one technological factor has affected the future directions of one global economic activity</li></ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Provides a general statement about the future directions of one global economic activity or economic enterprise</li></ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Provides an extensive list of technological factors</li></ul>	1

**Question 17 (b)***Outcomes assessed: H1, H4***MARKING GUIDELINES**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Marks</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrates in detail the relationships between political and sociocultural factors and the spatial patterns of one global economic activity</li></ul>	4–5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrates the relationships between political and/or sociocultural factors and the spatial patterns of one global economic activity</li></ul>	2–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrates a limited understanding of the relationships between political and/or sociocultural factors and the spatial patterns of one global economic activity</li></ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Writes in general terms about the political or sociocultural factors, or the spatial patterns, or a global economic activity, or an economic enterprise</li></ul>	1

**Question 18 (a)***Outcomes assessed: H12***MARKING GUIDELINES**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Marks</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provides detailed characteristics and features of TWO challenges for people living in mega cities in the developing world</li></ul>	3–4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provides characteristics and features of ONE challenge for people living in mega cities in the developing world</li></ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Names TWO but provides characteristics of ONE</li></ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Names TWO but provides general characteristics</li></ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provides a general statement of the characteristics of people living in mega cities</li></ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lists TWO challenges only</li></ul>	1



**Question 18 (b)**

*Outcomes assessed: H6, H12*

**MARKING GUIDELINES**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Marks</b>
• Provides, in detail, why or how people respond to the challenges of living in mega cities in the developing world	4–5
• Provides why or how people respond to the challenges of living in mega cities in the developing world	2–3
• Provides a general description relating to living in mega cities	1

## Section III

### Question 19

*Outcomes assessed: H1, H3, H12, H13*

#### MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Draws detailed, informed conclusions about the impacts of at least TWO urban dynamics operating in a large city of the developed world</li><li>• Demonstrates deep knowledge and understanding of the operation of urban dynamics</li><li>• Refers to appropriate case study with a variety of illustrative examples</li><li>• Presents a sustained, logical, and well structured answer using appropriate geographical information, ideas and issues</li></ul>	17–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Draws informed conclusions about the impacts of at least TWO urban dynamics operating in a large city of the developed world</li><li>• Demonstrates understanding of the operation of urban dynamics</li><li>• Refers to appropriate case study with illustrative examples</li><li>• Presents a logical, and well structured answer using appropriate geographical information, ideas and issues</li></ul>	13–16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Draws conclusion/s about the impacts of at least TWO urban dynamics operating in a large city of the developed world</li><li>• Demonstrates some understanding of the operation of urban dynamics</li><li>• Refers to a case study</li><li>• Presents a structured answer using appropriate geographical information</li></ul>	9–12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provides a description of urban dynamics operating in a large city of the developed world</li><li>• Uses some geographical information</li></ul> OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provides a description of ONE urban dynamic</li><li>• Refers to a case study</li><li>• Uses some geographical information</li></ul>	5–8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrates limited understanding of urban dynamics</li><li>• Limited or no reference to geographical information</li></ul>	1–4

**Question 20***Outcomes assessed: H2, H12, H13***MARKING GUIDELINES**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Marks</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provides an in-depth examination of a range of similarities AND/OR differences in both the nature and rate of change in ecosystem functioning in TWO ecosystems at risk</li><li>• Demonstrates deep knowledge and understanding of ecosystem functioning within the ecosystems at risk</li><li>• Refers to appropriate case studies</li><li>• Presents a sustained, logical, and well structured answer using appropriate geographical information, ideas and issues</li></ul>	17–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Examines a number of similarities AND/OR differences in both the nature and rate of change in TWO ecosystems at risk</li><li>• Demonstrates an understanding of ecosystem functioning within the ecosystems at risk</li><li>• Refers to appropriate case studies</li><li>• Presents a logical, and well structured answer using appropriate geographical information, ideas and issues</li></ul>	13–16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Illustrates the similarities AND/OR differences in both the nature and rate of change in TWO ecosystems at risk</li><li>• Demonstrates some understanding of ecosystem functioning</li><li>• Refers to case studies</li><li>• Presents a structured answer using appropriate geographical information</li></ul>	9–12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provides a general description of the nature and/or rate of change in TWO ecosystems at risk</li><li>• Refers to case studies</li><li>• Uses some geographical information</li></ul> OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provides a detailed examination of the nature and rate of change in ONE ecosystem at risk</li><li>• Refers to ONE case study</li><li>• Presents structured answer using appropriate geographical information</li></ul>	5–8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrates limited knowledge of ecosystems at risk</li><li>• Limited or no reference to geographical information</li></ul>	1–4



**Question 21**

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

**MARKING GUIDELINES**

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relates, in detail, cause and effect between global changes and linkages and flows associated with a local enterprise</li> <li>• Demonstrates deep knowledge and understanding of the interaction of a local enterprise with its environment at both a local and global scale</li> <li>• Refers to an appropriate case study</li> <li>• Presents a sustained, logical, and well structured answer using appropriate geographical information, ideas and issues</li> </ul>	17–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relates cause and effect between global changes and linkages and flows associated with a local enterprise</li> <li>• Demonstrates an understanding of the interaction of a local enterprise with its environment at both a local and global scale</li> <li>• Refers to an appropriate case study</li> <li>• Presents a logical, and well structured answer using appropriate geographical information, ideas and issues</li> </ul>	13–16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Displays some understanding of cause and effect of global changes, and linkages and flows associated with a local enterprise</li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates an understanding of the effects of global changes on a local enterprise</li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates an understanding of the linkages and flows associated with a local enterprise</li> <li>• Refers to a case study</li> <li>• Presents a structured answer using appropriate geographical information</li> </ul>	9–12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides a general description of the operation of the local enterprise</li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides an understanding of the effects of global changes on the economic activity</li> <li>• Refers to a case study</li> <li>• Uses some geographical information</li> </ul>	5–8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates limited knowledge of an economic activity/enterprise</li> <li>• Limited or no reference to geographical information</li> </ul>	1–4