



General Certificate of Secondary Education

Geography 3031 *Specification A*

3031/2F Full Course

Report on the Examination *2008 examination – June series*

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3031/2F

General

It was felt that the paper was accessible to those who had been entered at this level. This meant that the vast majority of candidates were able to respond positively to the questions. There were still some very poor responses but it appears that the weakest candidates have not been entered for the subject. Equally there were relatively few high Level 2 answers, suggesting that centres had entered the candidates for the most appropriate tier. There was a distinct lack of knowledge regarding place. Many tried to get ideas into their answers that they had been taught, whether they answered the question or not. While the depth of detail expected on the higher tier is not a requirement on this paper there must be a degree of clarity in candidates' answers. Centres should constantly remind their candidates that the use of linked statements is likely to move them into Level 2. There is still evidence of marks being thrown away, the lack of use of a ruler being one example when drawing graphs.

Overall the questions in Sections A and C were better answered than those in Section B. This was probably less marked than in previous years as section B included more stimulus material and there was clearer structuring of the questions. Questions based on stimulus material also tended to discriminate well, allowing the better candidates to show their ability. The quality of written English was as variable as ever, but there were more examples of candidates using properly structured sentences and appropriate technical terms than in previous years. Some answers were difficult to read so centres must remind candidates of the need to make their writing legible. The use of black ink is an obvious advantage for scripts which are marked on screen.

SECTION A

Question 1 Population

Most candidates could extract information from the population pyramids accurately. In most cases candidates could identify the correct pyramid. A number of candidates did fall into the trap of citing birth rate and death rate in their reasoning instead of restricting themselves to shape. The cloze exercise showed that many candidates understand how birth and death rates influence the shape of the pyramid. The DTM has been asked fairly regularly over the years and the majority of candidates were able to distinguish which lines represented the birth and death rates.

The answers to part (a)(iii) produced answers at both extremes. Candidates were either able to write a good answer showing understanding of the impact on the government of an ageing population, or they wrote a generalised answer looking at the general problems of not enough houses or not enough people working.

Many answered part (c) with reference to population growth, citing birth rates, contraception and inevitably China's one child policy. More worryingly was the call for euthanasia. Most candidates used Figure 4 to answer part (c). Some candidates described the reasons for the different areas without reference to population density. There were also references to Brazil as a city with the different areas being considered as urban zones. This was surprising considering these candidates presumably had not studied settlement. Many linked high-density population to wealth and low density to poverty.

Question 2 Settlement

Several candidates referred to numbers rather than description of the pattern in their answers to parts (a)(i) and (a)(ii). There was a tendency not to look carefully enough and say, "all are on main roads". Many said that the shops were all within the city boundary but this did not answer the question as only the shops within the city boundary are shown. As in Question 1 the cloze exercise was answered well. This was pleasing as the concept of a settlement hierarchy is an abstract one which many pupils find difficult to understand.

Candidates chose each of the four options in part (b)(iii) in about equal numbers. The majority of candidates explained the effects of B and C well. Being late for work was the usual response to B, but there is still too much use of unqualified pollution in candidates' answers. Centres should remind candidates that this will gain no credit. Most candidates focused correctly on the CBD in part (b) and many were able to describe specific examples of improvement. Some attempted, incorrectly, to describe an inner city and gave detailed accounts of such areas as the London Docklands. Centres who undertake CBD studies as the basis of the coursework component should encourage their candidates to make use of their enquiries in questions such as this.

Where candidates used the source material in part (c) there were some good answers, tying the general theory in with what they can see on the picture. Common points were the building materials, poor road surface and drainage. Many candidates did not use the photograph at all and simply regurgitated all the general features of a shanty town. This question would be useful for centres when helping candidates deconstruct a question in order that all parts of a questions are answered.

SECTION B

Question 3 Agriculture

The distribution of hill sheep farming was the best known in part (a)(i). The majority of candidates could give the meaning of arable farming. Very few candidates could correctly shade and identify an example of an arable farming area in the UK. Some attempted to copy the shading off one of the maps on the previous page, despite the fact that arable was not given as one of the possibilities in the table. There was a very limited awareness of the importance of the factors listed in part (a)(iv). Most were discussed in very general terms, often repeating the same information for each one, for example "it makes the crops go well".

The Netherlands case study was the one which most frequently allowed candidates to access Level 2, but there was still a general lack of clarity in their answers to part (b). The use of a systems approach helped these candidates, in contrast to the same question on the higher tier paper. Soil erosion is still a term candidates find difficulty in defining. Many repeated the word erosion or eroded and there was much confusion with soil exhaustion.

C and D were the most popular choices in part (c)(ii) with C being the most successful. The main error was the concentration on how the soil was ruined rather the effect of the removal of vegetation. In A, the burning out of the nutrients was a common misconception. Although appropriate technology appeared to be better understood than in previous years, many candidates are still not good at making effective use of stimulus material in questions. This is an area that centres could concentrate on to the benefit of their candidates. Too many merely lifted information from Figure 11 and made little attempt to explain why the techniques referred to were appropriate for the needs of the Sudanese farmer.

Question 4 Industry

Candidates had more difficulty in answering question part (a)(i) than the equivalent part of Question 3. There were some good answers to part (a)(ii). Many candidates, however, failed to gain a mark here as they gave examples rather than the meaning of the term 'tertiary industry'. There were few creditworthy answers to part (a)(ii). Many quoted examples of retail organisations or brand names. Some used the example given in Figure 12.

Many candidates misunderstood part (b)(ii) and looked at it from the idea of the advantages or disadvantages to the worker rather than industrial development. Very few candidates understood the purpose of cheap loans and low taxes. The best answers were to do with the longer working hours and not being allowed to strike.

There were some unrealistic responses given in part (c)(ii). Other candidates tended to write about the causes of pollution rather than the possible remedies.

The absence of precise locational information in part (d) matched that of the equivalent agriculture question. There was a tendency to describe industrial regions such as the Ruhr or to give general systems diagrams with no indication of a type of manufacturing industry.

Part (e) produced a large number of straight lifts but there was probably more evidence of some development of the points than in the equivalent part of Question 3. The most likely answer to lift to Level 2 was the provision of the skilled workforce due to the presence of the universities. A number of candidates also discussed the markets or the available labour pool due to the close proximity of the major cities

SECTION C

Question 5 Managing Resources

Too many candidates lost marks when completing the graph in part (a)(ii) by not shading the bars as in the key. Part (a)(ii) produced a mixed range of responses. There were some successful answers from candidates who used both resources and gave full evidence to back the statement. Those who discussed Figure 16 only and talked about the individual areas usually came up with a "disagree" and this resulted in a failure to gain marks because they were unable to see the global pattern.

Part (b)(i) was generally well answered. The response to the photograph was generally good but there were some candidates who just labelled features rather than the evidence for tourism, for example beaches without people or activities. All the quotes in Figure 19 were used, but C D and F were the most popular. The question was fairly well answered, provided candidates did not merely repeat the information in the quotation. There were some excellent accounts of tourism in Kenya, although inevitably perhaps, the temptation there was to discuss human attractions as well. Some of the weaker candidates used examples for MEDCs including the UK.

Question 6 Development

The larger size of the bars in Figure 21 than in the equivalent graph in Question 5 meant that the lack of a ruler proved more of a disadvantage here. The answers to part (a)(iii) were generally superior to those in Question 5, partly because there was only one map to interpret and because the statement is more easily supported.

Many answers referred to the quality rather than quantity of water in part (b)(i). There were also examples of answers citing drought and other issues that were not related to demand. Most

correctly related increasing demand to increasing world population. Very few answers referred to irrigation or industrialisation. Weaker candidates merely labelled features like the dam on the photograph in part (b)(ii) without relating them to their advantages or disadvantages for the development of LEDCs' water supply. Many concentrated solely on the environmental impact of the dam. All quotations from Figure 24 were covered; A, B, D and E were the most popular. Many candidates were able to score one mark for each part, but few developed their answers enough for the second mark. 'More money' was the basic answer for A and D. C was generally poorly answered. Some saw this as referring to a small amount rather than a small range. Few referred to the effect of climatic disasters, although there were a few mentions of falling prices. There were some excellent responses on Free Trade in the answers to D.

Part (d) covered a topic that had not been examined in depth before in this section. It produced a very varied set of responses, perhaps indicative of whether the candidate had studied agriculture in section B. There were some excellent answers developing points around irrigation and HYV crops with good case studies of the Green Revolution. At the other extreme there were answers that focused on erroneous ideas such as extending land, generally planting more crops and importing food from MEDCs.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [**Results statistics**](#) page of the AQA Website.