



General Certificate of Secondary Education

Geography 40304

Specification A

40304H Short Course

Report on the Examination

2010 examination - June series

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General

The entry for this component was relatively small and so any conclusions based on this year's cohort must be treated with a degree of caution. Candidates are likely to have been year 10s so there would be a degree of immaturity both in the quality of their answers and their command of effective examination technique. Centres should give candidates as much practice as possible in dealing with GCSE questions, not only in terms of the subject content but also the amount of space available for each of the different parts of the question. Candidates would benefit in their preparation by being given an idea of the type of question and the number of lines available for their response. Candidates should be made aware of the difference between point marked answers and those assessed by a levels of response mark scheme. With specific reference to levels of response marking it may be useful for centres to be aware of the generic descriptions of the different levels used by examiners in assessing candidates' answers.

Levels Marking - General Criteria

Where answers are assessed using a level of response marking system the following general criteria should be used.

Level 1: Basic

Knowledge of basic information

Simple understanding

Little organisation; few links; little or no detail; uses a limited range of specialist terms

Reasonable accuracy in the use of spelling, punctuation and grammar

Text is legible.

Level 2: Clear

Knowledge of accurate information

Clear understanding

Organised answers, with some linkages; occasional detail/exemplar; uses a good range of specialist terms where appropriate

Considerable accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar

Text is legible.

Level 3: Detailed

Knowledge of accurate information appropriately contextualised and/or at correct scale

Detailed understanding, supported by relevant evidence and exemplars

Well organized, demonstrating detailed linkages and the inter-relationships between factors

Clear and fluent expression of ideas in a logical form; uses a wide range of specialist terms where appropriate

Accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar Text is legible

Level 3 does not always equate to full marks, a perfect answer is not usually expected, even for full marks.

Candidates should always write in linked statements which will give them the necessary clarity to jump directly to level 2. The use of the 'so what' scenario is useful here. Detail is the key to level 3 as is the use of case studies. Often the question will demand one, but even if it does not then candidates should be advised to make use of one. A case study should be valid: candidates need to provide precise statistics, specific identifiable place names and other details that relate to real world schemes or locations. The Restless Earth and Tourism were the most popular options

Question 1 The Restless Earth

(a)(i) Most candidates scored at least one mark, usually with reference to earthquakes occurring at plate boundaries. Many candidates identified a second distributional factor and a few managed a third. (a)(ii) Most diagrams drawn by candidates were fairly basic, often in plan form, with only a few supported by accurate detailed labeling. In some cases, candidates illustrated a constructive/destructive plate boundary and were unable to access any marks. (b)(i) Many candidates accurately located the epicenter of the earthquake. (b)(ii) Most candidates correctly located the letter 'Y' but few candidates accurately located the letter 'Z'. (c) Most candidates correctly described several responses to a tsunami but a significant number focused on 'causes' and 'effects' with only occasional reference to response. The better answers differentiated between short and longer term responses and the very best, though these were rare, included detailed information related to a specific case study.

Question 2 Water on the Land

(a) Answered well by most candidates and usually when the statements referred separately to each of the three river stages. (b)(i) Most candidates referred to plunge pool and/or gorge but overall few candidates achieved full marks. (b)(ii) Basic diagrams of waterfall formation were drawn by most candidates but few candidates provided detailed, sequenced labels to explain their formation. (c)(i) Most candidates referred to differences in peak discharge and/or lag time with some, but not all, candidates referring to specific figures. (c)(ii) Many candidates were able to suggest at least one reason for the differences in the two hydrographs but few afforded more reasons or provided sufficient detail to reach level 2. (d) With the exception of the occasional very good response, most candidates included little detail in their response, referring in many cases only to dams and reservoirs and the transfer of water from areas of surplus to areas of deficit and at a fairly basic level.

Question 3 The Coastal Zone

(a)(i) Poorly answered. Few candidates appeared to have any real understanding about this particular process presumably because it is a completely new part of the specification. (b)(i) Most candidates were able to identify and label one landform correctly with only a few candidates able to identify correctly two or more. (a)(ii) Few candidates were able to clearly and fully explain the formation of a cliff/wave cut platform. (c)(i) Most candidates referred to global warming and/or the melting of the ice sheets and some candidates achieved full marks. (c)(ii) Most responses were fairly basic with limited reference to a case study example. Hence, few candidates reached level 2. (d) Variable responses here with the best answers, which were rare, achieving a balance between hard and soft engineering. A number of candidates failed to respond directly to the question hence there was little development of an argued response.

Question 4 Changing Urban Environments

(a) Most candidates recognised an overall increase in the world's urban population and/or a significant increase of urban populations in the poorer countries of the world. Some of the best answers supported their response with figures. (b)(i) Most candidates recognised one or two problems in inner city areas, which they identified using the photographs, such as closure of shops/factories and unemployment, yet few candidates achieved full marks. (b)(ii) Most candidates referred in general terms to a few different responses by the government designed to improve conditions in inner cities but few candidates linked or developed these simple statements or referred to specific case study examples. (c)(i) Most candidates provided at least

two basic reasons for the location of the squatter settlement. Few candidates however fully developed their answers. (c)(ii) Basic detail was provided by most candidates to describe how the location of a squatter settlement may affect the people living there but again few candidates provided sufficient detail to reach level 2. (c)(ii) Poorly answered. Many candidates confused factory work as work in the informal sector. Few candidates provided relevant details of the types of job undertaken or of the nature of this work.

Question 5 Changing Rural Environments

(a)(i) Most candidates recognised at least two changes to the village and a number achieved full marks. (a)(ii) Explanations for village growth tended to be rather basic with only a few candidates linking statements and fully developing their answers. (b) Poorly answered with few candidates able to refer to specific government initiatives related to making living in the countryside more sustainable. (c)(i) Whilst a number of candidates were able to identify one reason why subsistence tropical farmers remain poor, few candidates further developed this point to achieve a second mark. (c)(ii) Generally poorly answered with few candidates able to describe in detail the possible disadvantages of tropical subsistence farmers changing to cash crop cultivation. (c)(iii) Generally poorly answered with a lack of detail provided to fully answer the question.

Question 6 Tourism

(a)(i) Most candidates were able to use the graph to identify at least one relevant point about the world's top ten earners from tourism and many candidates two. (a)(ii) Few candidates achieved full marks. Most candidates referred to terrorist actions as listed in the question but relatively few candidates examined any additional factors. Of those candidates referring only to terrorists actions most correctly linked this to the amount of money that the UK earns from tourism. (b) Many candidates scored full marks on this question, correctly linking features to the different stages illustrated by the graph. (c) Most candidates identified at a basic level reasons why it is important for the tourist industry in a UK resort/ National Park to be successful. However, few candidates fully developed their response with linked statements / details. (d)(i) Most candidates were able to suggest at least one reason for the location of the new tourist areas, often referring to the location of the bathing beaches and / or proximity to Bridgetown. However, yet again few candidates fully developed their responses. (d)(ii) Generally well answered with most candidates identifying several disadvantages resulting from the large numbers of tourists visiting a tropical tourist area. A number of candidates in answering this question further linked statements and/or provided more specific detail enabling them to achieve higher marks.