GCSE 2004
June Series

Report on the Examination

Geography
Specification A

- ■ Full Course (3031)
- ■ Short Course (3036)

GCSE (3031/3036)

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General

In the second year of assessment of AQA Geography Specification A centres and candidates have maintained and in some areas improved the quality of responses in both the coursework and the written components. The Inset opportunities for the written papers and the opportunity for centres to attend coursework moderation meetings are a successful means of disseminating information regarding all aspects of the delivery and assessment of the Specification and those centres attending have benefited from the experience. It is pleasing to note that many centres are taking the opportunity to send new teachers of Spec A along to these meetings.

Examiners and moderators reported that the components of the examination differentiated across the ability range and that candidates were able to amply demonstrate what they knew, understood and could do. There was little evidence of any time problems and the majority of candidates were entered for the correct tier. However, it is worrying to note that there are still some candidates, especially on the Higher Tier, who were inappropriately entered and found the experience nigh on impossible. Centres are advised to build up a picture of the candidate's ability through a pattern of previous assessments in order to inform tiering decisions.

Fewer rubric errors were reported on both Higher and, perhaps more significantly, Foundation tier papers. Centres are to be thanked for their efforts to ensure that candidates select the appropriate questions to answer and so increase the chances of candidates providing the necessary breadth and detail to more fully answer those questions for which they have been prepared.

Literacy continues to be an issue with the quality of written communication mitigating against the ability of some candidates to clearly express geographical ideas. In particular the use of bullet points by candidates on the Higher Tier prevents real elaboration and detail of the salient points and on Foundation tier it is the absence of the more complex sentences and a tendency to list information that restricts the marks attained.

Analysis of this year's report on the examination and indeed for those in previous years generates a list of areas in which the candidates did well and did less well. This analysis shows that in general the weaknesses are focused, not as may be expected on their knowledge and understanding of the geography but more in terms of examination technique. Hence, the importance of correct interpretation of command words, avoiding rubric infringements, recognising the need to develop a point or more than one element and paying due attention to mark allocations are all significant in the final standard achieved by a candidate. Centres are well advised to consider how best they can maximise opportunities for candidates to practice examination-style questions in order to improve their examination technique.

3031/1F

Examiners reported that the paper differentiated well, with the candidates' scores ranging from single figures to over 60. Thankfully, fewer candidates this year committed rubric infringements and once again those that did were often the weakest candidates. A major weakness, however was that few candidates knew case study material and therefore marks were limited in those questions where a case study was requested. In addition there is a common tendency for Foundation tier candidates to list information throughout the paper. Any efforts centres can make to encourage these candidates to write more complex sentences linking ideas, especially in response to questions requiring description or explanation, would be well rewarded.

Section A

Examiners reported a general improvement in candidate's answers in section A, the skills questions.

Question 1(a)(i) was generally well answered and in (a)(ii) most attempted the question, giving an answer in kms. However, a significant minority of candidates gave incorrect distances that were often on the short side. Answers ranged from 1km to 20,000kms! In (a)(iii) many candidates scored full marks and the majority scored at least two marks. A small minority of candidates identified other squares <u>not</u> specified in the question. In (a)(iv) most candidates could both identify the correct square and name some features although fewer candidates could adequately describe the features well with reference to either names or location within the square. A common error was to refer to the A67 as a dual carriageway, and it was clear that a few candidates were describing the wrong square.

In Question 2(a)(i) most candidates answered correctly. A few identified other nearby locations such as the bus depot or site of the Bishop's Palace. Most candidates identified the correct road in (a)(ii) although fewer candidates gave the correct compass direction in (a)(iii), frequently reversing it to give SW rather than NE or NNE. Amusingly some candidates answered this with 'bird's eye view'. This was clearly a more difficult skill. In part (b) most candidates were able to identify creditworthy features but these were all too frequently given as a list. Reference was also often made to CBD features in general terms, e.g. shopping, offices etc without referencing comments to evidence found either on the street map or the photograph. Candidates should be advised to use the resources provided as indicated in the question rather than always trying to use their knowledge.

In question 3(a) the majority of candidates completed the compound bar graph accurately, although a small minority of candidates tried to complete it with vertical blocks! Some candidates' efforts lacked the accuracy necessary; usually a result of failing to use a ruler or drawing very thick lines. In part (b) few candidates answered this question well, with many simply repeating statistics from the table, or referring to population changes or reasons for growth in housing, rather than focusing on the question which specifically referred to the growth of Darlington.

Section B

Question 4 – Tectonic Activity

Question 4 remains a very popular question with centres. In part (a)(i) the majority of candidates were able to list three effects of the eruption. Some candidates however included the impacts on humans or the built environment not in the remit of the question. In (a)(ii) many candidates accessed Level 2 by making good links, e.g. people could not travel because flooding had destroyed the bridges, but others simply listed basic effects without any development to explain how the eruption affected the local people. A small minority described the physical impacts only that were not within the remit of the question. Part (b) was generally well answered although common errors were 'granite' instead of 'sandstone' and plates moving 'apart' instead of 'together'. The majority of candidates generally poorly answered part (c). The majority did not name an example and some referred to Mount St.

Helens and linked their response with the eruption in 1980. A significant minority left the answer blank, unable to recall any pertinent information. It is worth noting that candidates should be encouraged to attempt all questions even if they cannot recall a specific example. Marks would be available for general features of fold mountains. There were some very good answers to this question with a variety of examples being quoted and most candidates achieved at least two marks by reference to tourist based activities. However, examiners commented that Fold Mountains would appear to be less well known than earthquakes or volcanoes.

Question 5 - Rocks and landscapes

Question 5 was generally less popular than tectonic activity as a choice of question. In 5 (a)(i) the majority of respondents answered sedimentary correctly and in (a)(ii) most candidates identified at least two disadvantages although the quality of the description was sometimes weak with few candidates able to develop points successfully. A common error was to use the word 'pollution' in general terms and not to qualify it, for example by giving noise pollution from the machinery or lorries. In part 5 (b) the majority of candidates gained marks and accurately divided the remaining space in the bar chart to show 'storage' and 'machinery'. However, some candidates completed the pie chart in the wrong order whilst a few placed the divisions on the already shaded part of the chart! A few failed to shade or label the segments and sacrificed the third mark. Part (c) was surprisingly badly answered, with the first two gaps in particular posing problems. Many candidates believed water freezes at minus 5 degrees C and that granite has many layers rather than joints. Part (d) proved comparable with question 4 (c) where a significant number of candidates were unable to recall any physical features or an example. Knowledge of granite landscapes was rarely in evidence although several candidates could accurately identify an example but then proceeded to describe the human uses rather than the physical features.

Question 6 - River Landscapes and processes

This question remained a popular choice amongst centres. Part (a) was well answered by many candidates although a significant minority failed to adequately use the clues from Figure 9 and as a result found the question difficult. A very common error was to insert 'marsh' as opposed to 'deposition' in the final gap in this cloze procedure exercise. In part (b), while there were many good answers with a variety of examples being quoted, some responses were disappointing. A significant minority of candidates failed to refer to a case study in any detail and a surprisingly large number referred to the effects rather than the causes of a flood. There was also a significant minority who could not go beyond 'heavy rain' and others who perceived that a 'river bursting its' banks' is a cause of flooding. In part (c)(i) responses were generally good, most candidates correctly identified two or three changes to the river, although part (ii) was more challenging for some and fewer candidates could identify any advantages beyond reducing the risk of flooding.

Question 7 - Glacial landscapes and processes

Glaciation is a less popular choice amongst centres preparing candidates for the Foundation Tier paper although it was well tackled by many candidates who had been prepared for it. In (a)(i) there were many good sketches completed. The candidates appeared to have been well trained in sketching from a photograph and in part (ii) accurate labelling was the norm, although inevitably there was some confusion from some candidates, in particular in muddling the ribbon lake and corrie tarn. Part (iii) differentiated well and there was great variability in the quality of responses between centres and candidates. Some were excellent, linking processes to the development of the feature, most commonly the corrie and tarn, but others showed little understanding of glacial erosion or the individual features chosen. Some seemed still to be in rivers mode in their attempt to explain feature formation! In (b)(i) the majority of candidates identified one change in the footpath although fewer recognised the need to develop their answer for the second mark, for example by using the data provided in the table. In (b)(ii) the majority of candidates identified one or two methods of reducing footpath erosion though the quality of the description varied considerably and fewer were able to attain the maximum marks.

Question 8 - Coastal landscapes and processes

The coasts question remained a very popular question amongst centres. Part (a)(i) was well answered by most candidates and in part (ii) most candidates were able to identify some benefits to the tourist. However, fewer candidates developed their answers adequately to link these to individual aspects of the planned scheme, e.g. cleaner beaches was frequently identified but rarely was it linked to the proposed sewage pumping station. Candidates should be encouraged to make such links in their written work to add clarity to their answers and to be assured of achieving Level 2 responses. In (a)(iii) most candidates recognised the cost implications of the scheme or the visual impact as a disadvantage. However, there was a common misconception that the disadvantage would be pollution caused by the sewage pumping station! Many candidates answered part (b)(i) with a high degree of success, presenting diagrams clearly showing evidence of an arch and stack. However, a common error amongst others was to show the stack clearly but fail to indicate and identify an arch. In (b)(ii) many candidates included accurate definitions of one of the processes but few included both, and even fewer linked processes to the cave-arch-stack sequence.

Question 9 - Weather and climate

This remains the least popular question and is often low scoring due to it being attempted by candidates who infringe the rubric and only occasionally by candidates who have been taught the topic. In part (a)(i) few candidates accurately located more than one feature on the synoptic chart, with the centre of the low pressure most frequently identified correctly. Often labels lacked arrows or sufficiently accurate placement on the figure. In (a)(ii) the lowest pressure was usually given as 960mb rather than the more accurate 'under 960mb' or '954-960mb'. The former answer, however, was credited in the mark scheme. In (a)(iii) some candidates successfully used Figure 15 to complete the cloze procedure exercise although many candidates found the exercise difficult failing to score more than one mark, usually for 1020 or 1014 in the first space. Part (b)(i) was generally poorly answered with very few candidates referring to case study material. Although in part (ii) most candidates identified one or two basic effects, although many answers were not fully developed/or related to case study material.

Question 10 - Ecosystems

This question has gained in popularity in recent years although it remains less popular overall than say questions 4 and 8. Part (a)(i) was generally well answered, especially where candidates referred only to the core area. A common error was for candidates to select information from anywhere on the resource. In part (a)(ii) many candidates identified at least one or two advantages of the plan from the figure but few scored more than two marks as they failed to focus solely on the benefits to the local people. In a part (iii) many candidates achieved maximum marks, correctly identifying 'erosion' 'flooding' and 'money' as the words to complete the sentences. In part (b)(i) a surprisingly large number of candidates did not see 'drought' as the answer, and there were many ingenious responses. In part (iii) a significant majority of candidates identified at least one adaptation and were able to link this to the plant's survival. However, many candidates were unable to identify more than one adaptation or in some cases to develop their answer to clearly explain how the adaptation helped the tree to survive in the hot dry season. There was also a reasonable smattering of the inaccurate, such as 'big roots', and the imaginative.

3031/1H

General

The construction of the paper appeared to facilitate the marking process. There was little evidence of any misinterpretation of questions by candidates and there appeared to be good parity between each of the optional questions. There were relatively few rubric errors although those that did occur appeared to be centre-specific. Examiners expressed some concerns that centres had entered on to Higher Tier some very marginal candidates who struggled to respond successfully to the higher tier questions.

Section A

Question 1

(a)(i) This question enabled candidates to have a successful start and the question differentiated well. There was ample evidence of sound reference to the OS map and use of precise detail of the motorway, main roads and the railway. However, less articulate candidates wrote in terms of the pattern of routes rather than making reference to it in relation to the location of Darlington or made vague comments such as all of the routes go into Darlington. A minority failed to state the type of road at all and quoted the A470, a direct lift from the legend. There was also confusion as to whether Darlington was east or west of the motorway, and some candidates resorted to using left or right! Other common errors were to comment upon the railway station in isolation (not a route), or to become bogged down in minor routes not in the remit of the question
(ii) The majority of candidates achieved the correct distance of between 6 and 6.7 kilometres, or the equivalent in miles, although there were some wildly inaccurate answers from a minority.
(iii) This levels marked question generated the full range of possible answers. Many were able to recognise land uses and human features but were less successful in expressing them as direct explicit comparisons or in recognising the significance of the areas they were considering ie an inner city area as opposed to a suburban location. The use of geographical terminology also restricted some who were unable to go beyond the idea of both squares containing 'buildings' and inevitably there were answers that strayed into the physical such as relief and the presence of a river. Candidates have largely accepted the need to use the connecting words, e.g. whereas but all too often they use them without making any direct comparison, e.g. in GS3117 there is a secondary road whereas in GS 2913 there is a park. A minority of candidates were unable to locate the correct grid square in order to answer the question or made errors in interpretation, for example, seeing 'Ho' as a hotel.
(iv) Most candidates scored at least one mark in this question for a physical feature while others missed the significance of either the command word, to describe, and merely listed features or the request for 'features' (in the plural) and only adequately considered one feature. Elsewhere some candidates had only a weak understanding of the term physical and many found the description of relief difficult with terms such as 'steep' and 'hilly' being common.

Question 2

2a(i) – (iii) Many candidates scored maximum marks in this section. The majority of errors were made in part (iii) where the required direction was often reversed, ie SW was given rather than NE. Others missed the significance of the request for the *building* or *name* of the road and gave 'site of Bishops Palace' or the A68 that could not be gleaned from Figure 2.
(b) Many candidates scored maximum marks on this question although some candidates did stray into territory beyond the remit of the question, ie by stating what square A2 didn't have so it couldn't be the inner city etc and/or failing to quote the evidence in particular from the photograph. Weaker responses merely provided a list of descriptive features and failed to provide any explanation as required by the question.

Question 3

(a) The compound bar graph was accurately completed by the majority on the higher tier although there was the usual smattering of inaccuracies, largely a result of lines drawn too thick or without a ruler. In other cases the candidates insisted on starting each bar from the zero position.

(b) Few candidates were able to score both marks on this question. Many responded with the simple regurgitation of the figures from figure 4 without recognising their significance in relation to Darlington's growth or they strayed into an attempt to explain the growth.

Section B

Question 4 - Tectonic activity

This question remained a very popular option within centres. The majority of candidates answered question (a)(i) with little difficulty although some included human impacts that were not within the remit of the question. In (a)(ii) impacts on the local people were generally well done although some merely listed the effects from the figure without clearly explaining the impact that they would have on the local people. Others ventured into impacts on governments and emergency services that likewise were not creditworthy. In part (b) there were many excellent answers with detailed accounts and accurately labelled diagrams regardless of the mode of formation that was chosen. However, there were also some very weak responses where candidates could say little beyond the idea of plate movement and where diagrams were either inaccurate or absent. Alternatively some answers concentrated upon the formation of volcanoes rather than fold mountains as directed in the question. Part (c) generated a variety of answers from the detailed to the weak. The majority could name an example although what followed did not always answer the need for physical features but strayed into human uses or did not ring true for the example quoted.

Question 5 - Rocks and Landscapes

Question 5 remained fairly popular within centres. The pie chart in (a)(i) was accurately completed by the majority although some reversed the order and sacrificed a mark in so doing. In (a)(ii) there were some excellent answers although some candidates were content to merely rewrite information from Figure 8 without adding the necessary comment to explain the advantages and disadvantages. Some accounts also lacked balance, with the disadvantages being covered but little quality being achieved on the advantages, In part (b) most candidates were adept at describing the way water collects in joints and how over time the rocks break up. However, fewer recognised the need for temperatures to oscillate above and below freezing point for the process to occur. Part (c) discriminated well. Effective answers were secure in their case study and well tuned in to the needs for physical features, while others lacked an example and showed only very limited understanding of granite landscapes preferring to see the question as one about processes or human uses. Effective answers used Dartmoor, parts of the Yorkshire Dales and the Cairngorms as examples.

Question 6 – Rivers

This question continued to be very popular with centres. Candidates had few problems with (a)(i) although some did stray beyond changes to the channel including footbridges, nature reserves, etc. In (a)(ii) the majority of candidates could recognise the pertinent features of the scheme, ie less flooding, looks more natural, etc but few could then link this effectively to the attraction for visitors. In other answers the focus was clearly not on the scheme but other elements of the local environment shown on the Figure. Part (b) was generally very well done especially with reference to the sequence. Process information was often less well detailed, with candidates content to merely mention erosion and deposition without any clear explanation as to why it occurs in some locations and not others ie linking it to water depth and velocity. In part (c) the majority of candidates were able to quote an

example although the information that followed was often vague or did not ring true for the example quoted. In other cases the candidate misinterpreted the needs of the question seeing causes as effects. There were also some very excellent answers using Mozambique, the Mississippi, the Ouse and the Severn.

Question 7 - Glacial Landscapes and processes

This question seemed more popular this year and (a)(i) was generally well done with some stunning sketches and labels that used the correct geographical terminology. Only a handful of candidates elected to produce a cross-section rather than the required sketch. In (a)(ii) there were many high scoring answers with excellent knowledge and understanding of the sequence and processes leading to the formation of a variety of erosional landforms. Weaker answers tended to be incomplete in terms of the sequence but significantly were lacking in detail and accuracy of the processes at work to create the chosen landform. The omission of any reference to shape also limited some answers to level 2. Part (b) was answered well by the majority although some restricted their answers to only one solution in part (ii) when the question was in the plural and few took the opportunity to develop their answers or to include examples.

Question 8 - Coastal landscapes and processes

This question retains its popularity amongst centres. There were few problems with (a)(i) although in (a)(ii) many candidates could not provide the level of detail to attain level 3. Most answers were balanced in terms of including both advantages and disadvantages but there was inadequate use of the resource for names and examples or too limited explanation for the award of level 3. In addition a significant number of candidates saw the sewage works as being a disadvantage due to the smell and dumping sewage in the sea! Part (b)(i) was generally well done although a significant minority omitted to clearly indicate and label the arch as the intermediate stage. Part (b)(ii) was generally well done, especially with regard to wave action. However, the omission, by some candidates, to include reference to 'other processes' and/or how they contributed to stack formation limited the award of maximum marks and a common error was for candidates to confuse attrition and corrasion.

Question 9 - Weather and Climate

Relatively few responses to this question were seen. Centres who have prepared the candidates for this question respond well although the overall picture is often spoiled by the many weak answers produced by candidates who have infringed the rubric. The labelling of the synoptic chart in (a)(i) was generally well done although the ability to describe the pressure pattern was less effectively completed. In part (b) there were some excellent and detailed answers while a minority confused the anticyclonic conditions with those of depressions or were unable to add satisfactory explanations for the weather experienced, being content to merely describe the conditions. Part (c) was generally well done although a significant minority failed to name an example to illustrate the effects .

Question 10 – Ecosystems

This question seems to have grown in popularity. In (a)(i) there were many effective answers that interpreted the information well in terms of the advantages for the local people. However, less successful responses merely lifted the information and repeated it without making it relevant to the needs of the question. In (a)(ii) the benefits for the forest ecosystem were often clearly explained. Answers to (b)(i) were slightly disappointing. Few candidates were able to translate what could be seen on Figure 16 into an effective description but veered off into adaptations. By contrast (b)(ii) was well done by the majority, although a significant number remained at level 2 unable to give the necessary detail for level 3.

3031/2F

General

The candidates easily completed the paper in the allocated time. The questions enabled the lower ability candidates to gain marks and at the same time allowed the more able to write extended answers.
There was an even spread of choice across the paper with slight bias towards Question 4 in Section B and Question 5 in Section C. Rubric errors are still occurring, this year a number of candidates attempted both questions 1 and 2 to a greater extent than those attempting all 6 questions. This contravention was not confined to the weakest candidates.
In general, the vocabulary used did not present major problems, although certain terms were not recognised by the majority e.g. natural increase, function of a settlement and soil conservation. Skills questions were generally answered competently.

Section A

Question 1 – Population

Many candidates correctly answered (a)(i), although some candidates thought that migration was between LEDCs and MEDC.s and often presented ideas not shown in the resources (about jobs, education, health care). Other candidates also did not use the resource, as instructed, and wrote the benefits of migration.

Part (a)(i), (ii) and (iii), and (iv) were generally answered correctly, but a few candidates did confuse Push and Pull factors in (a)(iii). Few candidates achieved Level 2 in (b) with the majority presenting simple statements referring to the provision of skills and sending of money home, often reworking the information from the table above in (a)(iv). A significant number developed their answer around the advantages to the migrants, thus limiting themselves to Level 1. Part (c)(i) was generally well answered, but a significant few misinterpreted the key and presented the River Ganges Valley as an answer. In part (c)(ii) it was common false assumption that a dry climate was invariably hot, with the result that the issue of a water shortage was missed. In (d)(i) only a minority showed a clear understanding of natural increase and as a result this was a very low scoring section. In the final part most candidates gained credit in (d)(ii) and there was some good case study material on China's one child policy, although some still incorrectly linked the policy to Japan.

Question 2 – Settlement

Many candidates failed to interpret diagram 3 correctly. Weaker answers assumed the diagram showed the changes in number and size, or even population over time. Parts (a)(ii), (iii) and (iv) were generally answered well. The concept of function examined in (b) was very rarely well explained with the vast majority of candidates writing about the growth of villages and towns . Part (c)(ii) was widely misunderstood by the majority of candidates with relatively few comments about rural to urban migration, although the idea of high BR due to lack of contraception was included more often. Many answers concentrated on why industry was attracted to cities in LEDC's. In contrast part (c)(iii) was generally well answered with a wide range of acceptable responses. In the final section (iv) a great number of candidates misread this question and wrote about family planning, interpreting rapid growth to mean population growth. Only a minority of candidates gave a detailed coverage of self-help schemes backed by case study knowledge.

Section B

Question 3 – Agriculture
The majority of candidates answered (a)(i) correctly, but a few confused commercial farming with exports. Parts (ii) and (iii) were straight forward lifts from Figure 5, but some candidates tried to give alternative reasons not shown on the map. Candidates need reminding of the importance to use the source material when directed to do so. Candidates' graphic skills were shown to be generally good in part (iv), but some misinterpreted the question (v) and described the trend of the section they had completed and not the completed graph as was the intention in the question. The majority of the answers to section (b)(i) soil conservation were weak. Many missed the point and described how to improve soil fertility rather than soil conservation. Organic farming in part (ii) is another area where knowledge was lacking with many candidates only gaining one mark for their answer to A.
Very few candidates gained full credit for (c) as the majority of candidates were confused by the question and tried to fit all 4 statements into the two boxes when only 3 were creditworthy. The comparison of arable and sheep farming (c)(ii) was poorly answered with very few candidates able to give detailed comparisons. Many were only able to give basic responses 'sheep and hills'; 'arable on flat land' and quite a few candidates gave answers to why they could not occur in the same field. The final section (d) answers varied greatly from centre to centre with some excellent responses, which included precise case study information, while weaker candidates tended not to attempt this question. One problem that did arise was that some candidates quoted examples and locations inappropriate for a EU area.

Question 4 – Industry

The start of the question parts (a)(i) and(ii) were answered well, but there are still a surprising number of candidates who are not able to give a definition of secondary industry. Part (ii) and (iii) were done generally well, but some candidates did lose a mark because they extended the graph beyond 2001. Many candidates were aware of two reasons for the decline in secondary industry (iv) but few were able to develop their reason to gain the second point. Part (c)(i) was mostly answered correctly, but some candidates did forget the essential units. Answers to part (ii) were of a variable quality with the weaker candidates using only the source material in Figure 10 and therefore they tended to concentrate on using brownfield sites for parks and tourism, rather than industry as the question required. In part (d)(i) many candidates tried to include all four statements into the two boxes when only three were creditworthy, a similar problem to that encountered in Question 3 part (c)(i). Part (d)(ii) was very poorly done with only a minority appreciating that the question was about the application of government policies and not about how attractive areas of unemployment are to potential industrialists. Answers to part (e) often lacked specific detail, especially of the processes involved within a system. A surprisingly large number of candidates did not attempt this section and yet systems should be the means by which the industrial case studies are delivered in the classroom.

Section C

Question 5 – Managing Resource

Part (a)(i) was straightforward but (ii) was surprisingly poorly answered, with many candidates assuming that natural gas is a non-renewable energy source. In (iii) most candidates were able to give the level 1 response that resources will run out, with only some candidates able to give extended explanations of global warming, acid rain, or the need to develop specified renewable resources. Answers also highlighted the fact that there is still confusion/problems with the global warming and the depletion of the ozone layer. In (b)(i) most candidates, even the very weakest, successfully identified the correct letters, but in (b)(ii) whilst a solution to a problem was accurately given, very few candidates managed to identify its impact. Part (c)(ii) was well answered with those who failed to score having tended to give answers that did not state an activity. Some of the answers to (iii)

simply reused material from either Fig 13 or part (ii) when further development was needed In the final section (d) there were some high quality responses based on very good case study material, in particular Kenya, but some candidates are still missing the higher level by not including actual places or specific case study detail.

Question 6 – Development

Most candidates correctly answered (a)(i). However, in (a)(ii) very few candidates achieved a level 2 responses with the majority suggesting basic reasons such as 'putting up prices', or increasing 'wages'. Those candidates who did perform well based their answers on Fair Trade case study material. Part (b)(i) was generally well answered, but some weaker candidates ticked high GNP in the LEDC column, suggesting a lack of understanding of the initials GNP. As with 5b (i), 6b (ii) was extremely well done by the vast majority. In part (b)(iii) responses tended to concentrate on the likelihood of disease with little or no development to show how lack of clean water may affect people's lives. A large number of candidates did not recognise the construction of terraces and tended to describe the 'sticks' they could see in the photograph. Part (c)(ii) and (iii) were generally well answered. In the final section (d) many candidates concentrated on long term aid when the question was clearly emergency (short term) aid. Only those who developed their answer around a specific case study scored well in this question.

3031/2H

General

This year's paper performed well and was seen as a straightforward test of candidates' knowledge of the subject, whilst giving examiners the opportunity for appropriate discrimination. Many candidates were well prepared for this Higher tier but there seemed to be a significant number who would have been better served by sitting the Foundation tier. Rubric errors were few, usually made by the less able candidates who attempted the shorter sections of all of the questions where the answers were of ten dependent on information in the resource material.

Examiners reported that in an increasing number of centres, candidates were answering the same three questions, suggesting that many centres are restricting their teaching to one topic in each section. However, the use of case study material has improved significantly. Candidates are now prepared to cite real places and examples, so making it possible for them to access the higher levels of marks. There is still a problem with candidates not always reading the question accurately and many able candidates are losing marks in this way.

It is important that candidates understand that the quality of written communication is examined in each question. Whilst it will not affect the overall *level* of mark awarded for an answer, it can affect the mark within a level. There is confusion over similar sounding words such as *there* and *their*, *where* and *were* as well as the correct usage of words such as *affect* and *effect* and *practise/practice*. Also, communication such as candidates might use in text messaging is not what is expected in answer to the Higher tier paper.

Section A

Question 1 – Population

Marking the correct label onto the resource was not a problem for most candidates, but there was a lot of confusion between 'push' and 'pull' factors in the second part of (a). For those who did write about push factors, few developed their points sufficiently in order to access the higher level of marks.

The advantages to both countries involved in a movement of people from one country to another were expected in answer to section (b). A common error was to write about the advantages to the migrants themselves. Case study material was expected for higher level answers and there were many typical 'text book' answers about movements of Mexicans to the West coast of USA and the Turks to Germany. It was pleasing to see the use of current exemplars such as asylum seekers coming to the UK from Afghanistan, Iraq and Kosovo.

Many answers to the definition of population density required in part (c) were vague, e.g. 'the population in an area'. Candidates needed to specify the unit of area. However, very few had problems in identifying two areas of low population density shown on the map. In the final part of this section there were many candidates who failed to read the question accurately and included climatic and human factors in their answers.

China's One Child Policy featured strongly in answer to the question about what countries are doing to cope with rapid population increase and there were some very detailed answers. Birth control and education policies in India were also cited but very few wrote in any detail about irrigation schemes such as the Aswan Dam or land reclamation such as Zuider Zee.

Question 2 – Settlement

Many candidates found it difficult to express their answers to this seemingly simple question about settlement hierarchies (a)(i), treating the diagram like a graph. Despite the difficulties, most gained both of the available marks. The second subsection (a)(ii), allowed more able candidates to include geographical terms such as convenience and comparison goods, thresholds and spheres of influence in their answers as well as mentioning that urban zones are more likely to be identified in a town rather than a village.

A common fault in section (b) was for candidates to write about Inner Cities such as London docklands or Miles Platting, rather than the CBD. Some who wrote about the correct area forgot to mention any changes! The better answers were either case studies learned from textbooks or local exemplars. Changes resulting from the congestion charge in London were a frequent response.

The term 'urbanisation' in (c)(i) was not known by many candidates who assumed that it is just the growth of urban areas. However, the rest of the short answers in this sub section were well done. In (c)(iv), some candidates described rather than explained the distribution of cities and located them as 'above and below the equator' rather than using compass directions.

The final section of this question was asking for solutions, but many candidates wrote at length about problems. City planners were widely interpreted as any part of authority and frequent exemplars included self help schemes particularly in cities of Brazil and new towns such as those developed near Cairo. Details of these schemes were necessary for the higher level of marks.

Section B

Question 3 – Agriculture

Most candidates were able to give a correct response about commercial farming (a)(i), but the map showing how the location of the main coffee growing areas has changed (a)(ii), was described rather than explained by many. Of those who did attempt to explain, several assumed that shifting cultivation was taking place and so the coffee growing 'fields' would eventually come back to where they started after several years. Others erroneously linked lack of soil fertility to frost damage. In the final section of this sub section candidates were required to complete the graph. Most candidates did this accurately, although some candidates disadvantaged themselves by not using a sharp pencil.

There were some excellent answers about soil conservation and organic farming in section (b), with many using exemplars of how soil conservation methods, particularly in LEDC's may contribute to sustainable development, and detailed explanations of how eutrophication may take place as a result of using chemicals on the soil. However, there were candidates who restricted their answers to a brief description of the two terms. Crop rotation was occasionally mentioned but there was some confusion about GM crops.

There was a choice of two farming types in section (c) but many candidates wrote 'commercial' or 'subsistence' in the space given for the type which resulted in many generalised comments. Another error was to write about physical problems, particularly of a hazard nature, or to discuss human factors for the type of farming without making clear any problem. Better candidates wrote about e.g. the falling price of lamb, removal of subsidies, increased competition, low income and increasing costs.

The question suggested that a diagram could be used to illustrate the answer to the description of inputs, outputs and processes in part (d). Many candidates did just the diagram without any further explanation and so restricted their marks to the lower level. In some of the diagrams it was difficult to

identify which type of farming was being described. It was those candidates who used a case study in their answer who were most likely to score high marks in this section of the question.

Question 4 – Industry

As in the first part of question 3, many candidates lost marks in this question by failing to explain the distribution shown on the map. Section (b) often scored full marks, although as in the graph in the previous question candidates need to be encouraged to use rulers and sharp pencils to complete these skills questions.

Section (c) did not require an example however, those candidates that used one in their answer were often able to write in more detail about the effects of industrial decline on the environment and the local people. Both positive and negative effects were often explained with some excellent answers on South Wales and the North East.

Some candidates have the wrong idea about what governments can do, such as giving away land, lowering prices or providing labour. The best answers in this section used some geographic terminology and displayed the candidate's knowledge about enterprise zones, improving infrastructure, skill training and the use of planning decisions.

The same problem occurred in section (e) as in the equivalent section of question 3. This was sometimes exacerbated with confusion about including primary/secondary/tertiary industry. Again it was those candidates who used case study material who were likely to gain the higher levels of marks.

Section C

Question 5 – Managing Resources

In the first part of this question, some candidates confused parts of the car which could be recycled with the materials which can be reclaimed, but in part (a)(ii), most seem well versed in the limitations of non-renewable resources and the pollution they cause with may candidates giving detailed descriptions of global warming and acid rain.

'MEDC's are richer' was the most frequent response in section (iii) but many went on to explain that the fact they are developed and so they have more industry which requires the resources to run. This question was usually well answered.

Few candidates made errors in completing the boxes correctly in part (b)(i) but, although many appropriate solutions to the problems were suggested, not many went on to explain the impact of that particular solution on the problem.

Section (c) concerned tourism, but many candidates made the error of explaining why some *countries* rather than *environments* favoured tourism and so lost marks because their answers related to the income/jobs etc countries gain from a tourist industry rather than explaining how different types of tourist activity. In the final part of this question, candidates found that relating the advantages of tourism to the economy was easier than the disadvantages. The latter tended to be a discussion of an environmental or social nature such as the breaking up of the coral reefs by taking souvenirs or the wearing of bikinis in Muslim countries.

Question 6 – Development

The first parts of both section (a) and (b) in this question did not pose any problems for candidates. Fair Trade featured strongly in answer to part (ii) allowing many candidates to write with clarity on the issue of increasing the amount of money earned by LEDC's. Less clearly explained was the idea that LEDC's might do their own manufacturing and packaging of goods – 'make it themselves' was the most common response.

In section (b)(ii), many candidates mentioned only that unclean water results in people getting diseases and dying. More detail was needed such as naming a disease or explaining that disease may result in people being too ill to work. Few mentioned the time spent by people in searching for clean water. However, most candidates clearly understood that environmental hazards lead to destruction of homes, crops etc and the country has to spend money repairing buildings or feeding people and so has none left over to develop. Some excellent case studies were used about the effect of hurricane Mitch in Honduras and the volcanic eruption in Montserrat.

Not all candidates understood the term 'appropriate technology', but of those who did there were answers using specific exemplars such as SWACH scheme in India, or comparisons explaining that cattle are better than tractors, or simple irrigation schemes in Egypt better than the Aswan Dam. The Blue Peter Appeal for tractors was used in many answers.

The final question of the paper was not well done by many candidates because they did not restrict their answer to 'tied' aid and wrote about loans, emergency aid and paying back with interest. However, some candidates were able to give detailed disadvantages of this type of aid and the Pergau Dam project was an often used example.

In the paper, there did not seem to be any questions which proved popular except in the final section where question 5 was more popular than 6.

Foundation and Higher Tiers

Centre-Assessed Coursework - 3031/C

General

It is encouraging to report that a large number of centres obviously made use of the advice given in last year's feedback forms and Standardisation Meetings. The quality produced and the accuracy of the application of the marking criteria suggests that the information they received and the materials they were given were put to great effect. Moderators were impressed with the variety of coursework and the breadth of knowledge displayed by many of the candidates. The vast majority of work was appropriate, in that, it related to the taught Specification and allowed differentiation between candidates. Some excellent geography and an increasingly high standard of ICT made the process of moderation, in most cases, a pleasurable experience.

Teacher-led enquiries continue to be by far the most common format. Indeed, the individual enquiry is becoming an endangered species. The range of topics submitted was varied, the most popular theme being urban studies, with CBD investigations, shopping hierarchies, tourism, and traffic being dominant. This is not surprising, as in most cases, the urban environment provides a range of topics that are very accessible for most candidates and gives easier opportunities to re-visit the sites. This year an increasing number of centres opted for a purely physical study, with rivers and coastlines by far the most popular.

There were a few examples where teacher direction was not only apparent in the planning stage but also in the writing-up process. In extreme cases, the work was so directed that the enquiries became almost identical, each candidate using the same section from the textbook as the basis for their introduction and teachers selecting the data presentation techniques to be used with little input from the candidate. As a result, only in the data interpretation and evaluation sections could the candidate's true ability be assessed.

Some centres allowed their candidates to consider a large number of sub-hypotheses that, in some cases, were nothing more than predictions. This type of enquiry tends to become rather repetitive and fails to provide candidates with an opportunity to give an overview or summative statement. As a result, links to achieve Level 3 in the interpretation section are never fully developed or identified, with centres 'cherry picking' isolated phrases to justify the awarding of Level 3. Furthermore, this approach tends to develop into extremely long enquiries which some centres assume justifies high marks. Teachers have a clear responsibility to guide their students appropriately in title and task selection, as well as encouraging wherever possible, quality not quantity.

Finally, although most centres remained within the marking tolerance set by AQA, there was evidence this year that centres were assuming that if a candidate fulfilled the criteria for a particular level, then automatically they would be awarded the top mark in that level; this is not the case. There is room for differentiation and progression within each level, allowance has to be made for the quality of application by the candidates to the marking criteria. Whatever the reason for centres adopting such a strategy, if used across all the marking criteria, then it will inevitably lead to a discrepancy between centre marks and the standard required by AQA.

Administration

The quality of administration was much improved on last year with centres justifiably deserving credit for the professional way they approached this aspect of the moderation process. There was a small minority, however, who failed to meet even the basic requirements and, thus, delayed the whole process.

The new sampling procedure continued to work well and made sure that the number and composition of the sample sent from the centre was correct in the majority of cases. Improvements were seen in the speed of response from centres, in particular with regard to Centre Mark Sheets, which were being posted to the moderator much closer to the deadline than last year. However, the time taken for centres to respond to requests by moderators for work or information did vary enormously.

It is clear that there is a strong correlation between the effectiveness of internal lines of communication within the centre, in particular, between the Examinations Officer and the Head of Department, and the efficient way in which the whole moderation process is negotiated.

The following points need to be stressed.

- Centres, with 20 or fewer candidates, should ensure that all their candidates work together with the second and third copies of the Centre Mark Sheets (or an EDI print out) should arrive with the moderator by the deadline indicated, allowing time for postal delivery. If a centre has more than 20 candidates, they should ensure that, the second and third copies of the Centre Mark Sheets (or two copies of the DI print outs) should arrive with the moderator by the deadline indicated, allowing time for postal delivery. (Some centres only sent one copy of the CMS which meant a photocopy or note had to be made by the moderator of the sample requested as well as asking the centre to return a copy of the CMS). The moderator will return the third copy of the CMS (or one of the EDI print outs) indicating which candidates work needs to be forwarded as the sample. The work must be dispatched within five working days of notification from the moderator. If any centre anticipates that they are not going to meet the coursework submission deadline, then they will need to inform the Board and apply for an extension.

- The Candidate Record Form should be attached to the relevant pieces of work. They should be filled in correctly, making sure that the candidate numbers are placed in the relevant boxes and that both the teacher and the candidate have signed the document. Sometimes it is not always possible from the teacher's signature at the bottom of the CRF to clearly identify the name of the teacher involved in the marking of a particular piece of work. To save any confusion it would help if the teacher also printed their name next to their signature. In a number of cases centres used out of date CRF forms and, as a result, did not provide all the information required, such as summative statements and teacher signatures. The incorrect addition of marks on the CRF forms and the inaccurate transfer of the total mark to the Centre Mark Sheet also caused problems for the moderator. An increasing number of centres also failed to supply the Centre Declaration Sheet with the sample.

- Some coursework was sent with each page inside a plastic sleeve and this caused problems especially if the work is not secured properly. It would be appreciated if individual sheets could be removed from any plastic envelope; this would save time. Also, if the pages were numbered this would facilitate cross referencing particularly when it came to the summative comments on the CRF.

- The work should be securely packaged using AQA sacks. If the work could be placed in the sacks in rank order, resisting the temptation to cram far too many enquiries into one sack so that it splits in the post, it would be appreciated. Equally, there is no need to send the work by Registered Post as this requires the moderator to sign for the package, and inevitably this leads to delays, particularly if the moderator has to visit their local sorting office.

- The work should be submitted in simple plastic or manilla folders and not in hard back files or ring binders and so reduce the cost of postage. Also, if centres could ensure that if candidates are submitting large maps within their enquiry that they are not folded in such an intricate manner they prove impossible to open, this would be most helpful. It would also save moderators time if the candidate's name and total mark were placed on the outside of the folder.

- A number of candidates were given zero marks for the enquiry. If the candidate has submitted some work but it has been found to be worthless then 0 (zero marks) should be encoded in the 'Total Mark' box on the CMS. If the candidate has produced some evidence relating to the enquiry, no matter how basic, it would be extremely unlikely to be completely worthless. Centres need to examine the work of their lowest ability candidates carefully before giving zero, as experience has shown that, in a number of these cases, the work of the lower ability candidates is under-marked and that there is, within the work, elements that are indeed creditworthy. If a candidate has submitted no work or has withdrawn then 'X' should be encoded.

- The quality and quantity of teacher comments/annotation varied enormously. It was often excellent on the CRFs but less impressive in the body of the work as teachers did not always related comments to levels. There was ample evidence that comments were obviously provided by experienced specialist Geography teachers being detailed, informative and showing evidence of a clear understanding of the application of the marking criteria. However, a minority of centres provided only limited evidence that internal assessment had taken place.

- It is the responsibility of the centre to make sure that the sample of work and accompanying paperwork is correct. It is vital that time and resources are allocated to this part of the moderation process. In a few centres this had not been given priority and moderators spent more time dealing with the problems associated with administration than on assessing the quality of the Geography. It is also important that the internal standardisation process is carried out by the centre is rigorous. If there are problems with the marking, it is sometimes a result of one teacher's marking not being in line with the rest of the department.

Marking Criteria

In the majority of cases, the centre's marks were within tolerance with centres identifying the 'triggers' required to access the different levels and applying the marking criteria in a uniform manner across the whole department. Where centres were outside the tolerance, a common trend was for centres to either over-mark at the top end of the mark range or under-mark at the bottom. There were, however, a number of centres who had insufficient understanding of what was required and no appreciation of the 'triggers' necessary to move a candidate from one level to another.

Applied Understanding

In most cases, enquiries were well organised, based on a single, clear, manageable hypothesis, underpinned by sound geographical concepts that related to the taught Specification and were approached in an investigative mode. In the initial part of the investigation, the candidate through the use of a series of maps and written description, located the study area in detail. Candidates then went on, through description and explanation to clearly identify the key concepts that were then constantly referred to throughout the work.

In an effort to ensure a wide range of geographical terminology is used in the enquiry, a number of centres suggested that candidates include, within their introductions, a glossary of terms. This is a useful idea but it must be remembered that the terms chosen must be appropriate to the enquiry. It is not the comprehensive nature of this glossary or the detail of the definitions that determines the mark in this section. It is the application of these terms that provides evidence of the candidate's level of understand and, therefore, ultimately the mark in this section.

In the weaker enquiries, many of the hypotheses were inappropriate, poorly structured or over-ambitious and, as a result, failed to set an effective agenda for an enquiry. Locating the study area involved basic statements and simplified maps that were badly drawn and lack the normal conventions. Understanding was delivered through background information, scene setting or a series of chapters headed 'theory', with little cross-referencing or application to the data collected.

In the very weakest work, it was difficult to identify the purpose of the enquiry or the link to the taught Specification, there being no clearly stated question, issue or hypothesis. (Evidence would suggest that there was some misunderstanding by candidates and centres regarding the meaning of the term 'hypothesis'). In a few extreme cases, it was also impossible to even locate the study area. Some candidates packed their work with irrelevant and unnecessary information, taken from popular core textbooks or even downloaded from the Internet. Throughout the enquiry, no links were made to this material and generally it was never referred to.

The notion of 'application' was misunderstood by some and, as a result, this section was inaccurately assessed. Candidates were being awarded Level 3 applied understanding marks, sometimes as early as the first paragraph for very generalised and descriptive work. The key concepts were not clearly identified and were certainly not being applied. In extreme cases, this policy was adopted across the group and all candidates from the centre were given high applied understanding marks for explanations of theory that were almost identical, having been plagiarised from the textbook.

It was pleasing to see an increase in the use of annotated maps in the majority of enquiries. Maps of varying scales both hand drawn and ICT produced were used effectively by candidates to accurately locate study areas. It must be remembered, however, that the critical factor in determining the mark level in this section is how well candidates have applied their understanding throughout the investigation and not the quality or detail of the location statements. In one or two instances, candidates failed to find the right balance, spending most of their time and energy describing the location whilst neglecting the concepts underpinning the work.

Applied understanding is relevant in all sections, but is particularly important when it comes to data interpretation where the theory needs to be used to explain the patterns of data collected. It follows, therefore, that this section can only be accurately assessed when the whole of the enquiry is taken into account.

Methodology

This section was generally tackled well by candidates with the majority reaching the top of Level 2 without much difficulty. These candidates were able to identify a question or issue, state how the investigation was to be carried out, and provide a detailed description of two primary data collection methods that were to be used in the investigation. Access to Level 3 marks, however, proved to be a little more difficult even for the higher ability candidates.

Originality in data collection and justification of techniques are the major 'triggers' to accessing Level 3 marks in this section. The amount of teacher involvement in the organisation and direction of the enquiry is the critical issue. Heavily teacher-directed work and group activities prohibit Level 3 methodology marks, as the candidate is not being given the opportunity to show originality and initiative. In some cases, Level 3 marks were awarded to candidates whose definition of originality was questionable: little more than a minute difference in data collection technique. 'Originality' in this context must reflect initiative on the part of the candidate to produce a significant element of uniqueness in their enquiry. Centres need to find ways of giving fieldwork extension so able candidates can demonstrate a clearly defined element of uniqueness in their data collection.

It must be stressed that this is the only section of the marking criteria where originality and initiative is credited. A number of centres assume evidence of originality in other sections notably data presentation is sufficient to justify the awarding of Level 3 in this section. Equally, it is important to remember that originality and initiative are not the only criteria required for Level 3 Methodology marks. For example, a number of potential Level 3 candidates often relied too heavily on a narrow range of data usually only collected by means of a questionnaire. Some failed to justify their techniques or the merits of different sampling procedures.

A limited range of techniques, an inadequate sample size, failure to explain the rationale behind the hypothesis or, more likely, a detailed description of how the techniques were carried out without any explanation of why those particular techniques were used, would all prohibit progression into the higher lever, event if the candidate had produced an individual piece of work.

From the moderator's point of view, the element of originality is by far the most difficult area to assess in this section - a situation not helped by the failure, in some cases, to clearly identify this in the designated section on the CRF or within the body of the work.

One successful method used by some centres to make sure that their candidates covered all the criteria in this section, was to produce a methodology table. The table covered the what, when, how and why of the methods used. There was also a section for each candidate to describe their own individual contribution. This approach tends to work well for the lower ability candidates, but, for the higher ability, the table, in most cases, does not provide enough detailed information for access to Level 3.

It must also be stressed that marks are not awarded in this section for a list of data collection methods per se. Methods described by the candidate can only be classed as valid, and therefore, creditworthy, if they are actually used in the investigation to collect a significant amount of primary or secondary data. Centres continue to award marks, particularly to weaker candidates, for describing the full range of data collection techniques that they intended to use in their teacher-directed investigation. In reality, these candidates used few, if any of the techniques described and this should have been reflected in the marking. If no data is forthcoming from a particular technique, for example, a candidate writing to a company for information and receiving no reply, there may be a justification in exploring the circumstances for a failed response in the evaluation section but there is no value or credit to be gained in the methodology section. Even some high ability candidates produce a disappointing amount of data from what appears to be a comprehensive and robust methodology section.

Data Presentation

Centres continued to impress with the quality of work produced in this section and the wide range of techniques and skills exhibited by their candidates. In many cases, the presentation techniques showed flair and imagination, as well as fulfilling the criteria, allowing access to Level 3 marks.

It was common, however, for this section to be over-marked. Some centres confusing 'attractive' with 'more complex' so Level 3 was frequently being awarded for a limited range of what were basic techniques. Even when three different techniques were used, a great number of candidates failed to achieve Level 3 as the techniques chosen lacked complexity.

The marking levels in this section reflect a balance between the number of techniques used and level of complexity displayed by those techniques. In the best enquiries, candidates used a variety of appropriate, high order techniques accurately, such as, choropleths, scattergraphs, proportional flow lines, located pie charts and so on. In the weaker studies, candidates used only one type of low order technique, for example bar graphs or pictograms repeatedly to represent the data. Graphs, if used, were not very accurately drawn, either with no labelling of the 'x' and 'y' axes, or an inappropriate vertical scale. Any maps used were usually photocopies; if simple maps were hand drawn, they usually lacked the normal conventions.

It is not possible to provide a definitive list of more complex techniques because with care, accuracy and a little elaboration, the majority of techniques have the potential to access the highest levels. The annotation of photographs, for example, is a presentation skills that is seen at all levels. A low level of labelling might see the candidate only giving the photograph a title; at an intermediate level, the candidate might indicate relevant features, and at the highest level, the candidate will interpret those features. The same progression can be identified for most presentation techniques, hence no list.

To access Level 2 and Level 3 marks in this section, all candidates have to provide evidence of at least two different types of ICT outcome in their enquiry. Candidates with no ICT had their marks in this section limited to Level 1, provided all other Level 1 criteria had been met. This compulsory element of ICT continues not to present many problems to centres. Most candidates satisfied the basic ICT requirement and so had the opportunity to progress beyond Level 1. A significant number of candidates submitted entirely ICT generated enquiries. A number of these particular enquiries were outstanding, in terms of data presentation, but the majority were disappointing, containing as they did, a large number of fairly basic bar and pie graphs. To access Level 3 marks, there has to be evidence of 'more complex' techniques being used. It is not essential that the element of complexity indicated within the Level 3 statement is delivered by means of ICT, but if it is not, then it has to be shown by other means.

The type and quality of data collected determines the range of presentation techniques that can be used. There was clear evidence that candidates of all abilities used forms of data that were inappropriate in some techniques. The most common misused techniques included the humble line graph and the more sophisticated Spearman's rank correlation. Centres and candidates should ensure, at the planning stage, that the data collected is appropriate for the data presentation techniques being consider by the candidate.

The quality of written communication was generally quite pleasing, with the majority of candidates being able to express themselves with reasonable accuracy. The use of Spellchecker in the word-processed enquiries clearly benefited some candidates.

Data Interpretation

This section proved to be a useful discriminator. The majority of candidates described, as well as analysed, their results. In other words, they 'ordered' the data by calculating percentages, proportions and highlighted patterns or anomalies. Explanations were then provided that took full advantage of the opportunity to apply the theory underpinning the enquiry to the results. Candidates then went on to demonstrate links and draw valid conclusions that related to the original hypothesis.

It is worth stressing that the Level 3 statement requires the candidate to demonstrate within the context of their analysis links between the sets of data collected. Some teachers awarded Level 3 on the basis that the candidate simply linked the data to the hypothesis. Such statements do not fulfil the criteria in that they tend to lead directly to the formulation of a conclusion and in doing so by-pass the analysis process.

In some instances, candidates divided their analysis into sections, each section based on an individual data collection technique with no attempt to produce an overview or summative statement. As a result, a number of candidates reached the top of Level 2 easily but simply repeated that level over and over again, failing to identify links either between the data sets or links back to the original hypothesis and thus failed to progress to the next level.

The amount and type of data collected obviously impacts upon the quality of the data interpretation section. For example, 'in-depth' interviews with farmers, supermarket managers and letters requesting information from various companies, although valid techniques, they were very rarely used effectively by candidates. No attempt was made to edit, interpret or analyse the information, the vast majority simply repeated the interview verbatim or inserted the information in an appendix.

The techniques used to present the data can also have repercussions in terms of data interpretation. For example, candidates of all abilities commonly used Spearman's Rank Correlation. Not all candidates, however, were capable of interpreting or even understanding the significance of the results produced by such an advanced mathematical calculation.

In a few cases, candidates were overwhelmed by the vast amount of data they had collected. They were unable, or failed, to recognise or identify any common theme or overview and resorted to ordering the data into different sections that they saw as unrelated or unconnected. The weaker candidates simply answered questions or confirmed predictions without any reference to their actual results.

The main weakness among candidates was that they gave a description without reference to the results that they had collected. The description, therefore, lacked an element of analysis. In addition, centres over-credited descriptive essays at too high a level on the mark scheme, and as a result, inflated marks were awarded for basic description of data. This was particularly true of physical studies which were quite often heavily descriptive especially where the main form of data collection is 'look, see'. Large amounts of description could often be discarded if more careful analysis of the actual data had taken place.

Comments and annotation within the body of the work suggested that there was some confusion with regard to the crediting of conclusions. The awarding of marks for conclusions reached by the candidate, after examination and analysis of the data, should be considered in this section, rather than in the evaluation.

Evaluation

The majority of centres appeared to have an understanding of the need to cover all three components. Of the centres that appreciated the demands of this section, limitations of methods were usually covered comprehensively, allowing easy access to the top of Level 2, with more general comment being made about the effect of these limitations on the accuracy of the results. A number of candidates focused their evaluation on the accuracy of the results and then went on to identify problems in the methods that could have caused such discrepancies. Similarly, these candidates achieved Level 2 marks quite easily. It was the evaluation of the conclusions, however, that proved to be the weakest element. For example, candidates often failed to suggest why their conclusions, however valid, may be a reflection of the particular location and time when the enquiry was undertaken and so cannot be considered applicable in the wider content.

Evaluation presented a problem for some centre with candidates having a tendency to write in congratulatory terms rather than highlighting limitations. Any evaluation statements tended to be vague and general, rather than detailed and specific. In the weaker enquires, the emphasis was placed solely upon what could have been done to improve the enquiry process. This approach frequently resulted in a 'wish list', without any attempt being made to state how these improvements would influence the methods, the results or the conclusions.

In the most effective enquiries, candidates, rather than just discussing in detail the three components of the criteria separately, identified the fact that poorly/faulty methodology led to inaccurate results and that conclusions based upon such results had, therefore, questionable validity.

The two important points to remember about this section are firstly, it carries the same marks as the other criteria. Secondly, it is not about making judgements regarding the quality of the Geography, but is an opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of the enquiry process. Centres need to spend more time getting the message across to students that a more critical and reflective approach is required.

3036/F

General

The paper seemed to be accessible to most candidates and encouraged achievement across the target ability range. There were still a number of rubric infringements, particularly from the weaker candidates who attempted the shorter sections from each question.

Some questions in the optional sections of the paper proved more popular than others. In the physical section, B, the questions on Tectonic Activity and Coastal Landscapes and Processes were the ones most commonly answered with the question on Glacial Landscapes and Processes the least popular. The Settlement question was by far the most popular in Section C, the human section, with a smaller number attempting the Managing Resources question and very few attempting the question on Agriculture.

Although last year's report clearly stated that candidates need to study exemplars in many of the topics, they were again sadly lacking this year. Not all questions require a case study, but if candidates write about specific places they are more likely to include the detail necessary in order to score the higher levels of marks.

Section A

Question 1

The first question proved an encouraging start for most candidates who ticked the correct box to say whether the statement was true or false. However, very few candidates measured the distance by rail between the two railway stations accurately. Answers varied widely, from 1 to 20 000 kms!

The correct square was identified by most candidates in part (iii), but few described the features well, with reference to either names or locations within the square. A common error was to describe the A67 as a motorway or a dual carriageway. Some candidates described features in the adjacent square, 2513.

Question 2

The correct road in (a)(i) was usually identified but many candidates failed to give the correct compass direction.

Creditworthy features of the CBD were identified easily by candidates in part (b), but answers tended to be in lists, so failing to answer the 'why' part of the question.

Question 3

Many candidates completed the graph accurately, although some lost marks by drawing too thick a line which covered a whole percentage, or who did not use a ruler. A few did not attempt this question or tried to complete it using vertical blocks.
The second part of this question was often answered by repeating the figures used for the graph or comments about population changes or increases and decreases of housing rather than making reference to the physical growth of Darlington.

Section B

Question 4 - Tectonic Activity

Most candidates gave three effects of the eruption but some included impacts on the *human* instead of the *natural* environment. In (ii) basic effects were listed, but often no links were made as to the effect on the local people. E.g. bridges were washed away *so* people could not travel.

Candidates completed the paragraph accurately except for writing 'granite' instead of 'sandstone' and the plates moving 'apart' instead of 'together'.

 In section (c), young fold mountains appeared to be a mystery for many candidates. Few were able to give an example of such mountains although some mentioned the Cascades from the stem of the question above. For the few who scored credit in this question, it was often for a description of tourist based activities.

Question 5

Completing the paragraph about the formation of an oxbow lake was poorly answered, despite the resource, figure 7, which provided the relevant information. In part (b), many candidates lost marks by describing the effects rather than the causes of a flood and only a few were able to refer to a case study in any detail.

The final section of this question made use of the resource on the insert. Changes that have taken place on this section of the River Skerne were easily identified by candidates, although some did not give three. Many candidates found it difficult explaining the advantages of the scheme to the area, apart from reducing the risk of flooding.

Question 6

Some high quality sketches of the photograph of part of the Lake District were seen, but labels of the features were often inaccurate. Candidates also found it difficult to explain the formation of a chosen feature and there was little reference by name to any glacial process.

The second section of the question about footpath erosion was better answered. Candidates were able to describe a change in the footpath and better candidates gave precise detail such as a measurement change or a change in the surface of the path in order to gain the second mark. Valid suggestions were made about reducing footpath erosion although many of the poorer candidates could think only of tarmac.

Question 7

Candidates had no difficulty in giving three ways in which the planned scheme for Lyme Regis may help to reduce coastal erosion. They found the explanation of how the scheme may benefit tourists more difficult, failing to develop their answers to explain that e.g. improving the slipway and providing a new boat hoist will make it easier for visitors to launch boats. Disadvantages were related mainly to 'cost' and 'ugliness' although some thought that there might be pollution caused by the sewage pumping station!

Many diagrams displayed the stack in answer to section (b), but most failed to identify an arch. The quality of the diagrams was generally poor and very few candidates could explain coastal processes or link the processes to the cave-arch-stack sequence.

Section C

Question 8

The correct box was usually ticked in (a)(i) and many candidates scored full marks in (ii). Common errors included 'planned' for 'unplanned' and 'wealthy' for 'migrant'. In the third part, many candidates identified at a simple level how planners have attempted to reduce the problems of shanty towns, but few developed their answers. This is an example of how writing about a specific place might encourage candidates to give more detail, despite the fact that exemplars were not a requirement of the question.

Most candidates wrote the correct title in the box and explained how their choice of 'way' would improve people's lives. The most common 'way' to be chosen was A, 'local people are to be encouraged to walk and cycle to work', no doubt a response to the media coverage of the concerns over obesity in the UK.

The last section of this question was very disappointing. The term 'green belt' was known by only a few and candidates did not know what is meant by the term 'rural-urban fringe'. In the final section, many candidates did not refer to any case study and confused the inner city with the CBD.

Question 9

It appeared that few candidates who attempted this question had been taught the topic; most answers were from candidates who had infringed the rubric. However, the correct box was often ticked in (a)(i), but few candidates completed the paragraph with the correct words. There was little knowledge of changes that have taken place in a type of farming in the EU and, as many candidates failed to say which type of farming they were discussing, the changes given were extremely vague.

Those who appeared to have studied this topic were able to give the correct response in (b)(i) but found it difficult to score both of the available marks in (b)(ii) because they often referred to an increase in a farmer's income but failed to explain why.

In section (c), few candidates knew the correct meaning of the two terms and one rather than two boxes tended to be correct. Very few candidates had any idea about the features of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy.

Question 10

Candidates were able to tick the correct box in (a)(i) and complete the paragraph in (ii). Errors arose from confusing 'human' with 'physical' attractions.

Some candidates were able to describe 'green tourism' but were unable to relate their descriptions to an acceptable example.

Many candidates chose the correct title for the box in (c)(i) and were able to explain how the type of pollution might be reduced. The more common choice of cause of pollution was A, 'coal and oil are used in power stations'. In part (iii), the correct boxes were usually ticked suggesting a sound understanding of renewable energy, but many candidates had little knowledge about the location of a renewable energy scheme and had difficulty in describing the disadvantages of renewable energy.

3036/H

General

The paper appeared to be accessible for the target candidates, providing differentiation between candidates and the majority were entered correctly for this tier. Candidates had plenty of opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skill and understanding of the course and to use their case studies.

Rubric errors were few, but some of the less able did attempt the shorter answers in every question, answers which were often dependent upon the resources provided. Some candidates failed to answer in sentences, preferring bullet points. Candidates should be reminded that the quality of written communication is assessed throughout the paper and it is usually more difficult to access the higher levels of marks if answers are in phrases rather than in sentences.

SECTION A
Skills

Question 1

Accurate measuring of the distance by rail in the first section was not a problem for the majority of candidates and it is pleasing to see that most candidates now remember to put in the units of measurement. The comparison between the two squares was less well done. Most candidates located the two squares accurately but proceeded to list the land uses in each, rather than make explicit comparisons. Of the squares under comparison, one displayed very typical inner city features such as terraced housing and the other was on the rural-urban fringe with more modern housing estates in the south west of the square. More able candidates noted this difference.

Question 2

Of the three short questions in part (a), the third, which asked for the compass direction in which the camera was facing, proved to be the most testing for candidates.

Suggesting why square A2 is likely to be the CBD of Darlington, (part (b)), required some explanation as to why the features seen were typical of such an area. Many candidates, however, listed features such as the Town Hall, library, car parks with no further development of their answer.

Question 3

The completion of the horizontal bar graph in (a) proved easy for most candidates but some lost marks by drawing too thick a line or by not using a ruler. Using the graph to make suggestions about Darlington's growth in (b) was less successfully answered. Many responses repeated the figures from the graph without further suggestions.

SECTION B

Question 4 - Tectonic Activity

This was a very popular question and most candidates scored full marks in section (a) with only a few ignoring the words 'natural environment' in part (i). The response to the question about explaining the formation of young fold mountains varied from candidates who gave very detailed explanations of destructive plate margins and subduction zones accompanied by annotated diagrams to others who limited their answers to a brief description of two plates moving towards each other causing their edges to buckle up.

In section (c), the Alps or the Himalayas were the most common examples given, but many candidates lost marks because they described human uses of the mountains instead of describing their physical features.

Question 5 - River Landscapes and Processes

The first section of the question (a) was based on the resource and candidates had no problems in identifying two changes to the channel of the River Skerne since the river has been restored. In part (ii), some candidates did not restrict their answer to the restoration scheme to explain how visitors may be attracted, but wrote about Rockwell Nature Reserve. This Nature Reserve is not identified as 'new' on the resource and so these answers did not gain credit.

Many candidates scored full marks in part (b) by producing excellent explanations and annotated diagrams regarding the processes and sequence of the formation of oxbow lakes. This topic is always very popular and it is unfortunate that some candidates still confuse the areas of erosion and deposition.

Part (c) required candidates to describe the causes of a flood that they had studied. There have been many recent examples of flooding both in the UK and elsewhere in the world, many of which were used successfully in answer to this question. However, it was surprising to find a number of centres whose candidates used the historic Lynmouth Floods of 1952 as their case study. Some candidates lost marks because they used generic explanations rather than a specific example and some wrote about the consequences of a flood rather than the causes.

Question 8 - Glacial Landscapes and Processes

This question was the least popular in Section B. The sketches in (a)(i) were of variable quality. Candidates should be reminded that marks are not given for artistic ability – many artistic students had obviously spent a long time producing detailed drawings of the photograph. Others had portrayed the salient features with a very few simple lines and this is quite adequate. Simple sketching is a skill that needs to be practised by more candidates in preparation for the examination. The labelling needs to be precise, such as using an arrow to locate the feature rather than writing over a large section of the sketch so the examiner is unsure as to the exact point which is being labelled.

In choosing a feature to write about in part (ii), candidates were required to display their knowledge of glacial processes in the formation of the feature as well as describing its shape. Some excellent answers were seen about corries, but those who chose to write about a pyramidal peak or arête often omitted to write about the glacial processes which formed the corries surrounding the feature. Some candidates failed to answer both parts of the question i.e. describing the shape *and* explaining the formation of the feature.

The topic of footpath erosion appeared to be well known by most candidates who accurately described the changes and gave a variety of suggestions as to how the erosion may be reduced. Marks lost were often because they did not explain *how* their suggestions might lessen the problem.

Question 7 - Coastal Landscapes and Processes

Giving three different ways in which the coastal defence scheme for Lyme Regis may help coastal erosion proved an easy three marks for candidates who had chosen to answer this popular question, but explaining the advantages and disadvantages for tourists proved more difficult.   Many candidates lost marks because they wrote about the benefits and the costs to the town rather than the advantages and disadvantages for the tourists. There was also confusion about the sewage pumping scheme with many candidates suggesting it was going to be an eyesore, give off unpleasant smells and be very undesirable for swimmers!

Diagrams required to show how a stack may develop, which was the second part of this question, were often detailed and accurately labelled. Candidates enjoy learning about this feature as they do in studying oxbow lakes in the Rivers area of the specification, and so usually display a sound knowledge of the processes involved and the sequence of events in its formation.

SECTION C

Question 8 - Settlement

This was the most popular question in Section C. Section (a) was about shanty towns and candidates responded very positively in the first two sections. Although an exemplar was not a requirement of the question in part (iii), those who used case study material were more likely to include the detail necessary to score the higher levels of marks.

Congestion charging, such as the London scheme, was the most common response in section (b) in answer to reducing the problems caused by traffic. However, many candidates used schemes they had studied in particular locations such as Park and Ride in Oxford, the Metro in Newcastle or walking buses used by their local primary school.

Not all candidates knew the meaning of the term 'urban sprawl' and so failed to answer the second part of this subsection with any clarity. A case study was a requirement of the question and there were some detailed answers about the impact of urban growth on the surrounding countryside as well as the effects on the CBD when many shops move from there to the urban fringe for their chosen city or town. This was a question in which many candidates made use of their local knowledge.

Question 9 - Agriculture

Few candidates attempted this question and answers were generally poor. Part (a) was particularly poorly answered and it seemed that few candidates had learnt about any type of farming in the EU in any detail. Many of the expected answers about economic problems and changes that have taken place were related to EU policy, prices of farm products and the development of non-agricultural activities on farms. Problems discussed by candidates were often physical rather than economic and the changes described were vague and frequently related to LEDC farming.

Candidates had a much better knowledge and understanding of organic farming and the ways in which modern farming methods may harm the environment. The process of eutrophication was the most common response. Some candidates mentioned various problems but failed to explain them and so were unable to access the higher levels of marks.

In the final part of this question, a variety of changes to farming in LEDC's were mentioned, particularly the Green Revolution, but not all candidates explained how the changes affected the lives of the farmers.

Question 10 - Managing Resources

The map was well used to explain various tourist activities possible in the Castleton area; however, many candidates were confused about the term 'green tourism'. For those that did understand the term, there were some detailed answers about National Parks in the UK and game reserves in Kenya.

Global warming and its causes is a popular topic and most candidates were able to give detailed explanations about its causes, (only one was required), and how it can lead to the higher temperatures of the earth.

Renewable energy sources are also a well known topic, but candidates needed to explain the advantages of the location of one that had been studied. Many chose to describe how a type of renewable energy is produced rather than answering what was asked and others gave generic answers to location rather than using a case study. As a result, these candidates were unable to score the higher marks in this section. Detailed answers were seen, especially on the Three Gorges Project in China and off-shore wind farms in North Wales.

Foundation and Higher Tiers

(Short Course) Centre-Assessed Coursework - 3036/C

General

It is encouraging to report that a large number of centres obviously made use of the advice given in last year's feedback forms and Standardisation Meetings. The quality produced and the accuracy of the application of the marking criteria suggests that the information they received and the materials they were given were put to great effect. Moderators were impressed with the variety of coursework and the breadth of knowledge displayed by many of the candidates. The vast majority of work was appropriate, in that, it related to the taught Specification and allowed differentiation between candidates. Some excellent geography and an increasingly high standard of ICT made the process of moderation, in most cases, a pleasurable experience.

In many cases, there was no obvious difference between the coursework submitted for the Short Course and that produced for the Full Course. This was highlighted in centres that had candidates entered for both courses; it was impossible to distinguish between the two sets of enquiries. In the vast majority of cases, the work was identical, and therefore, interchangeable. Generally, no allowance was being made for the reduced word limit or the more detailed and specific marking criteria that was designed to lessen the demands made on candidates in completing Short Course enquiries. Centres were generally asking too much of their Short Course candidates.

It is also worth noting that, where centres did enter candidates for both courses and used identical coursework, the Short Course marking, in most cases, was more accurate than the Full Course. It would seem that teachers carry through the notion of one concept, three methods of data capture and three 'more complex' data presentation techniques to the Full Course and thus, over-mark their scripts. It is important to remember that the Short Course coursework and the Full Course coursework have discrete sets of marking criteria. Centres assume that they are interchangeable and that the number of data collection techniques, for example, identified for Level 3 Methodology in the Short Course automatically fulfils the definition of 'a comprehensive range' in the Full Course and, therefore, qualifies the candidate for the equivalent level in the Full Course.

Teacher-led enquiries continue to be by far the most common format. Indeed, the individual enquiry is becoming an endangered species. The range of topics submitted was varied, the most popular theme being urban studies, with CBD investigations, shopping hierarchies, tourism, and traffic being dominant. This is not surprising, as in most cases, the urban environment provides a range of topics that are very accessible for most candidates and gives easier opportunities to re-visit the sites. This year an increasing number of centres opted for a purely physical study, with rivers and coastlines by far the most popular.

There were a few examples where teacher direction was not only apparent in the planning stage but also in the writing-up process. In extreme cases, the work was so directed that the enquiries became almost identical, each candidate using the same section from the textbook as the basis for their introduction and teachers selecting the data presentation techniques to be used with little input from the candidate. As a result, only in the data interpretation and evaluation sections could the candidate's true ability be assessed.

Although the majority of centres remained within the marking tolerance set by AQA, there was evidence this year that centres were assuming that if a candidate was fulfilling the criteria for a particular level, then automatically they would be awarded the top mark in that level. This is not the case; there is room for differentiation and progression within each level and so allowance has to be made for the quality of the application by the candidate to the marking criteria. Whatever the reason

behind such an approach, if adopted across all the marking criteria, then it will inevitably lead to a discrepancy between centre's marks and the standard required by AQA.

Finally, the profile of the typical Short Course centre and the function the Short Course performs within the school curriculum would appear to be changing. There are now an increasing variety of small institutions involved, a significant number of which could not be classed as mainstream schools. Centres are no longer entering candidates in large numbers and entry is no longer limited to Key Stage 4. This is having an impact on the quality of work produced, as a number of these candidates would appear to be frequently less motivated or have yet to fully develop their geographical skills. Centres expect, nevertheless, to achieve a full mark range, and in some cases, end up marking candidates and not work, giving marks for effort in exceptional circumstances.

Administration

The quality of administration was much improved on last year with centres justifiably deserving credit for the professional way they approached this aspect of the moderation process. There was a small minority, however, who failed to meet even the basic requirements and, thus, delayed the whole process.

The new sampling procedure continued to work well and made sure that the number and composition of the sample sent from the centre was correct in the majority of cases. Improvements were seen in the speed of response from centres, in particular with regard to Centre Mark Sheets, which were being posted to the moderator much closer to the deadline than last year. However, the time taken for centres to respond to requests by moderators for work or information did vary enormously.

It is clear that there is a strong correlation between the effectiveness of internal lines of communication within the centre, in particular, between the Examinations Officer and the Head of Department, and the efficient way in which the whole moderation process is negotiated.

The following points need to be stressed:

- Centres, with 20 or fewer candidates, should ensure that all their candidates work together with the second and third copies of the Centre Mark Sheets (or an EDI print out) should arrive with the moderator by the deadline indicated, allowing time for postal delivery. If a centre has more than 20 candidates, they should ensure that, the second and third copies of the Centre Mark Sheets (or two copies of the DI print outs) should arrive with the moderator by the deadline indicated, allowing time for postal delivery. (Some centres only sent one copy of the CMS which meant a photocopy or note had to be made by the moderator of the sample requested as well as asking the centre to return a copy of the CMS). The moderator will return the third copy of the CMS (or one of the EDI print outs) indicating which candidates work needs to be forwarded as the sample. The work must be dispatched within five working days of notification from the moderator. If any centre anticipates that they are not going to meet the coursework submission deadline, then they will need to inform AQA and apply for an extension.

- The Candidate Record Form should be attached to the relevant pieces of work. They should be filled in correctly, making sure that the candidate numbers are placed in the relevant boxes and that both the teacher and the candidate have signed the document. Sometimes it is not always possible from the teacher's signature at the bottom of the CRF to clearly identify the name of the teacher involved in the marking of a particular piece of work. To save any confusion it would help if the teacher also printed their name next to their signature. In a number of cases centres were using out of date CRF forms and, as a result, did not provide all the information required, such as summative statements and teacher signatures. The incorrect addition of marks on the CRF forms and the inaccurate transfer of the total mark to the Centre Mark Sheet also caused problems for the moderator. An increasing number of centres also failed to supply the Centre Declaration Sheet with the sample.

- Some coursework was sent with each page inside a plastic sleeve and this causes problems especially if the work is not secured properly. It would be appreciated if individual sheets could be removed from any plastic envelope; this would save time. Also, if the pages were numbered this would facilitate cross referencing particularly when it came to the summative comments on the CRF.

- The work should be securely packaged using AQA sacks. If the work could be placed in the sacks in rank order, resisting the temptation to cram far too many enquiries into one sack so that it splits in the post, it would be appreciated. Equally, there is no need to send the work by Registered Post as this requires the moderator to sign for the package, and inevitably this leads to delays, particularly if the moderator has to visit their local sorting office.

- The work should be submitted in simple plastic or manilla folders and not in hard back files or ring binders and so reduce the cost of postage. Also, if centres could ensure that if candidates are submitting large maps within their enquiry that they are not folded in such an intricate manner they prove impossible to open, this would be most helpful. It would also save moderators time if the candidate's name and total mark were placed on the outside of the folder.

- A number of candidates were given zero marks for the enquiry. If the candidate has submitted some work but it has been found to be worthless then 0 (zero marks) should be encoded in the 'Total Mark' box on the CMS. If the candidate has produced some evidence relating to the enquiry, no matter how basic, it would be extremely unlikely to be completely worthless. Centres need to examine the work of their lowest ability candidates carefully before giving zero, as experience has shown that, in a number of these cases, the work of the lower ability candidates is under-marked and that there is, within the work, elements that are indeed creditworthy. If a candidate has submitted no work or has withdrawn then 'X' should be encoded.

- The quality and quantity of teacher comments/annotation varied enormously. It was often excellent on the CRFs but less impressive in the body of the work as teachers did not always related comments to levels. There was ample evidence that comments were obviously provided by experienced specialist Geography teachers being detailed, informative and showing evidence of a clear understanding of the application of the marking criteria. However, a minority of centres provided only limited evidence that internal assessment had taken place.

- It is the responsibility of the centre to make sure that the sample of work and accompanying paperwork is correct. It is vital that time and resources are allocated to this part of the moderation process. In a few centres this had not been given priority and moderators spent more time dealing with the problems associated with administration than on assessing the quality of the Geography. It is also important that the internal standardisation process is carried out by the centre is rigorous. If there are problems with the marking, it is sometimes a result of one teacher's marking not being in line with the rest of the department.

Marking Criteria

In the majority of cases, the centre's marks were within tolerance with centres identifying the 'triggers' required to access the different levels and applying the marking criteria in a uniform manner across the whole department. Where centres were outside the tolerance, a common trend was for centres to either over-mark at the top end of the mark range or under-mark at the bottom. There were, however, a number of centres who had insufficient understanding of what was required and no appreciation of the 'triggers' necessary to move a candidate from one level to another.

Applied Understanding

In most cases, enquiries were well organised, based on a single, clear, manageable hypothesis, underpinned by sound geographical concepts that related to the taught Specification and were approached in an investigative mode. In the initial part of the investigation, the candidate through the use of a series of maps and written description, located the study area in detail. Candidates then went on, through description and explanation to clearly identify the key concepts that were then constantly referred to throughout the work.

In an effort to ensure a wide range of geographical terminology is used in the enquiry, a number of centres suggested that candidates include, within their introductions, a glossary of terms. This is a useful idea but it must be remembered that the terms chosen must be appropriate to the enquiry. It is not the comprehensive nature of this glossary or the detail of the definitions that determines the mark in this section. It is the application of these terms that provides evidence of the candidate's level of understand and, therefore, ultimately the mark in this section.

In the weaker enquiries, many of the hypotheses were inappropriate, poorly structured or over-ambitious and, as a result, failed to set an effective agenda for an enquiry. Locating the study area involved basic statements and simplified maps that were badly drawn and lack the normal conventions. Understanding was delivered through background information, scene setting or a series of chapters headed 'theory', with little cross-referencing or application to the data collected.

In the very weakest work, it was difficult to identify the purpose of the enquiry or the link to the taught Specification, there being no clearly stated question, issue or hypothesis. (Evidence would suggest that there was some misunderstanding by candidates and centres regarding the meaning of the term 'hypothesis'). In a few extreme cases, it was also impossible to even locate the study area. Some candidates packed their work with irrelevant and unnecessary information, taken from popular core textbooks or even downloaded from the Internet. Throughout the enquiry, no links were made to this material and generally it was never referred to.

The notion of 'application' was misunderstood by some and, as a result, this section was inaccurately assessed. Candidates were being awarded Level 3 applied understanding marks, sometimes as early as the first paragraph for very generalised and descriptive work. The key concepts were not clearly identified and were certainly not being applied. In extreme cases, this policy was adopted across the group and all candidates from the centre were given high applied understanding marks for explanations of theory that were almost identical, having been plagiarised from the textbook.

It was pleasing to see an increase in the use of annotated maps in the majority of enquiries. Maps of varying scales both hand drawn and ICT produced were used effectively by candidates to accurately locate study areas. It must be remembered, however, that the critical factor in determining the mark level in this section is how well candidates have applied their understanding throughout the investigation and not the quality or detail of the location statements. In one or two instances, candidates failed to find the right balance, spending most of their time and energy describing the location whilst neglecting the concepts underpinning the work.

Applied understanding is relevant in all sections, but is particularly important when it comes to data interpretation where the theory needs to be used to explain the patterns of data collected. It follows, therefore, that this section can only be accurately assessed when the whole of the enquiry is taken into account.

Methodology

This section was generally tackled well by candidates with the majority reaching the top of Level 2 without much difficulty. These candidates were able to identify a question or issue, state how the investigation was to be carried out, and provide a detailed description of two primary data collection methods that were to be used in the investigation. Access to Level 3 marks, however, proved to be a little more difficult even for the higher ability candidates.

Originality in data collection and justification of techniques are the major 'triggers' to accessing Level 3 marks in this section. The amount of teacher involvement in the organisation and direction of the enquiry is the critical issue. Heavily teacher-directed work and group activities prohibit Level 3 methodology marks, as the candidate is not being given the opportunity to show originality and initiative. In some cases, Level 3 marks were awarded to candidates whose definition of originality was questionable: little more than a minute difference in data collection technique. 'Originality' in this context must reflect initiative on the part of the candidate to produce a significant element of uniqueness in their enquiry. Centres need to find ways of giving fieldwork extension so able candidates can demonstrate a clearly defined element of uniqueness in their data collection.

It must be stressed that this is the only section of the marking criteria where originality and initiative is credited. A number of centres assume evidence of originality in other sections notably data presentation is sufficient to justify the awarding of Level 3 in this section. Equally, it is important to remember that originality and initiative are not the only criteria required for Level 3 Methodology marks. For example, a number of potential Level 3 candidates often relied too heavily on a narrow range of data usually only collected by means of a questionnaire. Some failed to justify their techniques or the merits of different sampling procedures.

A limited range of techniques, an inadequate sample size, failure to explain the rationale behind the hypothesis or, more likely, a detailed description of how the techniques were carried out without any explanation of why those particular techniques were used, would all prohibit progression into the higher lever, event if the candidate had produced an individual piece of work.

From the moderator's point of view, the element of originality is by far the most difficult area to assess in this section - a situation not helped by the failure, in some cases, to clearly identify this in the designated section on the CRF or within the body of the work.

One successful method used by some centres to make sure that their candidates covered all the criteria in this section, was to produce a methodology table. The table covered the what, when, how and why of the methods used. There was also a section for each candidate to describe their own individual contribution. This approach tends to work well for the lower ability candidates, but, for the higher ability, the table, in most cases, does not provide enough detailed information for access to Level 3.

It must also be stressed that marks are not awarded in this section for a list of data collection methods per se. Methods described by the candidate can only be classed as valid, and therefore, creditworthy, if they are actually used in the investigation to collect a significant amount of primary or secondary data. Centres continue to award marks, particularly to weaker candidates, for describing the full range of data collection techniques that they intended to use in their teacher-directed investigation. In reality, these candidates used few, if any of the techniques described and this should have been reflected in the marking. If no data is forthcoming from a particular technique, for example, a candidate writing to a company for information and receiving no reply, there may be a justification in exploring the circumstances for a failed response in the evaluation section but there is no value or credit to be gained in the methodology section. Even some high ability candidates produce a disappointing amount of data from what appears to be a comprehensive and robust methodology section.

Data Presentation

Centres continued o impress with the quality of work produced in this section and the wide range of techniques and skills exhibited by their candidates. In many cases, the presentation techniques showed flair and imagination, as well as fulfilling the criteria, allowing access to Level 3 marks.

It was common, however, for this section to be over-marked. Some centres confusing 'attractive' with 'more complex' so Level 3 was frequently being awarded for a limited range of what were basic techniques. Even when three different techniques were used, a great number of candidates failed to achieve Level 3 as the techniques chosen lacked complexity.

The marking levels in this section reflect a balance between the number of techniques used and level of complexity displayed by those techniques. In the best enquiries, candidates used a variety of appropriate, high order techniques accurately, such as, choropleths, scattergraphs, proportional flow lines, located pie charts and so on. In the weaker studies, candidates used only one type of low order technique, for example bar graphs or pictograms repeatedly to represent the data. Graphs, if used, were not very accurately drawn, either with no labelling of the 'x' and 'y' axes, or an inappropriate vertical scale. Any maps used were usually photocopies; if simple maps were hand drawn, they usually lacked the normal conventions.

It is not possible to provide a definitive list of more complex techniques because with care, accuracy and a little elaboration, the majority of techniques have the potential to access the highest levels. The annotation of photographs, for example, is a presentation skills that is seen at all levels. A low level of labelling might see the candidate only giving the photograph a title; at an intermediate level, the candidate might indicate relevant features, and at the highest level, the candidate will interpret those features. The same progression can be identified for most presentation techniques, hence no list.

To access Level 2 and Level 3 marks in this section, all candidates have to provide evidence of at least two different types of ICT outcome in their enquiry. Candidates with no ICT had their marks in this section limited to Level 1, provided all other Level 1 criteria had been met. This compulsory element of ICT continues not to present many problems to centres. Most candidates satisfied the basic ICT requirement and so had the opportunity to progress beyond Level 1. A significant number of candidates submitted entirely ICT generated enquiries. A number of these particular enquiries were outstanding, in terms of data presentation, but the majority were disappointing, containing as they did, a large number of fairly basic bar and pie graphs. To access Level 3 marks, there has to be evidence of 'more complex' techniques being used. It is not essential that the element of complexity indicated within the Level 3 statement is delivered by means of ICT, but if it is not, then it has to be shown by other means.

The type and quality of data collected determines the range of presentation techniques that can be used. There is clear evidence that candidates of all abilities are using forms of data that are inappropriate in some techniques. The most common misused techniques include the humble line graph and the more sophisticated Spearman's rank correlation. Centres and candidates should ensure, at the planning stage, that the data collected is appropriate for the data presentation techniques being consider by the candidate.

The quality of written communication was generally quite pleasing, with the majority of candidates being able to express themselves with reasonable accuracy. The use of Spellchecker in the word-processed enquiries clearly benefited some candidates.

Data Interpretation

This section proved to be a useful discriminator. The majority of candidates described, as well as analysed, their results. In other words, they 'ordered' the data by calculating percentages, proportions and highlighted patterns or anomalies. Explanations were then provided that took full advantage of the opportunity to apply the theory underpinning the enquiry to the results. Candidates then went on to demonstrate links and draw valid conclusions that related to the original hypothesis.

It is worth stressing that the Level 3 statement requires the candidate to demonstrate within the context of their analysis links between the sets of data collected. Some teachers are awarded Level 3 on the basis that the candidate simply linked he data to the hypothesis. Such statements do not fulfil the criteria in that they tend to lead directly to the formulation of a conclusion and in doing so by-pass the analysis process.

In some instances, candidates divided their analysis into sections, each section based on an individual data collection technique with no attempt to produce an overview or summative statement. A a result, a number of candidates reached the top of Level 2 easily but simply repeated that level over and over again, failing to identify links either between the data sets or links back to the original hypothesis and thus failed to progress to the next level.

The amount and type of data collected obviously impacts upon the quality of the data interpretation section. For example, 'in-depth' interviews with farmers, supermarket managers and letters requesting information from various companies, although valid techniques, they were very rarely used effectively by candidates. No attempt was made to edit, interpret or analyse the information, the vast majority simply repeated the interview verbatim or inserted the information in an appendix.

The techniques used to present the data can also have repercussions in terms of data interpretation. For example, candidates of all abilities commonly used Spearman's Rank Correlation. Not all candidates, however, were capable of interpreting or even understanding the significance of the results produced by such an advanced mathematical calculation.

In a few cases, candidates were overwhelmed by the vast amount of data they had collected. They were unable, or failed, to recognise or identify any common theme or overview and resorted to ordering the data into different sections that they saw as unrelated or unconnected. The weaker candidates simply answered questions or confirmed predictions without any reference to their actual results.

The main weakness among candidates was that they gave a description without reference to the results that they had collected. The description, therefore, lacked an element of analysis. In addition, centres over-credited descriptive essays at too high a level on the mark scheme, and as a result, inflated marks were awarded for basic description of data. This was particularly true of physical studies which were quite often heavily descriptive especially where the main form of data collection is 'look, see'. Large amounts of description could often be discarded if more careful analysis of the actual data had taken place.

Comments and annotation within the body of the work suggested that there was some confusion with regard to the crediting of conclusions. The awarding of marks for conclusions reached by the candidate, after examination and analysis of the data, should be considered in this section, rather than in the evaluation.

Evaluation

The majority of centres appeared to have an understanding of the need to cover all three components. Of the centres that appreciated the demands of this section, limitations of methods were usually covered comprehensively, allowing easy access to the top of Level 2, with more general comment being made about the effect of these limitations on the accuracy of the results. A number of candidates focused their evaluation on the accuracy of the results and then went on to identify problems in the methods that could have caused such discrepancies. Similarly, these candidates achieved Level 2 marks quite easily. It was the evaluation of the conclusions, however, that proved to be the weakest element. For example, candidates often failed to suggest why their conclusions, however valid, may be a reflection of the particular location and time when the enquiry was undertaken and so cannot be considered applicable in the wider content.

Evaluation presented a problem for some centre with candidates having a tendency to write in congratulatory terms rather than highlighting limitations. Any evaluation statements tended to be vague and general, rather than detailed and specific. In the weaker enquires, the emphasis was placed solely upon what could have been done to improve the enquiry process. This approach frequently resulted in a 'wish list', without any attempt being made to state how these improvements would influence the methods, the results or the conclusions.

In the most effective enquiries, candidates, rather than just discussing in detail the three components of the criteria separately, identified the fact that poorly/faulty methodology led to inaccurate results and that conclusions based upon such results had, therefore, questionable validity.

The two important points to remember about this section are firstly, it carries the same marks as the other criteria. Secondly, it is not about making judgements regarding the quality of the Geography, but is an opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of the enquiry process. Centres need to spend more time getting the message across to students that a more critical and reflective approach is required.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Full Course

Foundation tier

Component	Maximum Mark (Raw)	Maximum Mark (Scaled)	Mean Mark (Scaled)	Standard Deviation (Scaled)
3031/C	30	65	27.1	11.4
3031/1F Paper 1	70	104	56.3	14.9
3031/2F Paper 2	75	91	50.2	11.3
Foundation tier overall 3031/1F	--	260	133.6	30.9

		Max. mark	C	D	E	F	G
3031/C boundary mark	raw	30	15	12	9	6	3
	scaled	65	33	26	20	13	7
3031/1F Paper 1 boundary mark	raw	70	47	41	35	29	23
	scaled	104	70	61	52	43	34
3031/2F Paper 2 boundary mark	raw	75	49	44	39	34	29
	scaled	91	59	53	47	41	35
Foundation tier scaled boundary mark		260	156	136	116	97	78

Higher tier

Component	Maximum Mark (Raw)	Maximum Mark (Scaled)	Mean Mark (Scaled)	Standard Deviation (Scaled)
3031/C	30	65	46.5	11.6
3031/1H Paper 1	70	104	65.3	13.7
3031/2H Paper 2	75	91	54	12.3
Higher tier overall 3031/1H	--	260	165.9	31.9

		Max. mark	A*	A	B	C	D	allowed E
3031/C boundary mark	raw	30	27	23	19	15	12	-
	scaled	65	59	50	41	33	26	-
3031/1H Paper 1 boundary mark	raw	70	53	47	41	35	28	-
	scaled	104	79	70	61	52	42	-
3031/2H Paper 2 boundary mark	raw	75	56	48	40	33	28	-
	scaled	91	68	58	49	40	34	-
Higher tier scaled boundary mark		260	199	174	149	125	102	90

Provisional statistics for the award

Foundation tier (25603 candidates)

	C	D	E	F	G
Cumulative %	24.3	47.1	68.9	84.2	93.1

Higher tier (41067 candidates)

	A*	A	B	C	D	allowed E
Cumulative %	16.0	40.4	69.0	89.2	97.4	98.9

Overall (66670 candidates)

	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Cumulative %	9.8	24.9	42.5	64.3	78.1	87.4	93.3	96.7

Short Course

Foundation tier

Component	Maximum Mark (Raw)	Maximum Mark (Scaled)	Mean Mark (Scaled)	Standard Deviation (Scaled)
3036/C	30	30	10.7	5.1
3036/F	70	90	41.4	12.5
Foundation tier overall 3036/F	--	120	51.9	15.6

		Max. mark	C	D	E	F	G
3036/C boundary mark	raw	30	15	12	9	7	5
	scaled	30	15	12	9	7	5
3036/F boundary mark	raw	70	45	40	36	32	28
	scaled	90	58	1	46	41	36
Foundation tier scaled boundary mark		120	70	62	55	48	41

Higher tier

Component	Maximum Mark (Raw)	Maximum Mark (Scaled)	Mean Mark (Scaled)	Standard Deviation (Scaled)
3036/C	30	30	19.5	5.4
3036/H	70	90	52.3	11.4
Higher tier overall 3036/H	--	120	71.8	14.9

		Max. mark	A*	A	B	C	D	allowed E
3036/C boundary mark	Raw	30	30	25	20	15	12	-
	scaled	30	30	25	20	15	12	-
3036/H boundary mark	raw	70	54	49	44	39	30	-
	scaled	90	69	63	57	50	39	-
Higher tier scaled boundary mark		120	96	86	75	65	51	44

Provisional statistics for the award

Foundation tier (579 candidates)

	C	D	E	F	G
Cumulative %	11.7	25.0	42.0	57.9	70.1

Higher tier (403 candidates)

	A*	A	B	C	D	allowed E
Cumulative %	4.7	19.9	41.9	64.8	89.8	97.3

Overall (982 candidates)

	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Cumulative %	1.9	8.1	17.2	33.5	51.6	64.7	74.0	81.3

Definitions

Boundary Mark: the minimum (scaled) mark required by a candidate to qualify for a given grade. Although component grade boundaries are provided, these are advisory. Candidates' final grades depend only on their total marks for the subject.

Mean Mark: is the sum of all candidates' marks divided by the number of candidates. In order to compare mean marks for different components, the mean mark (scaled) should be expressed as a percentage of the maximum mark (scaled).

Standard Deviation: a measure of the spread of candidates' marks. In most components, approximately two-thirds of all candidates lie in a range of plus or minus one standard deviation from the mean, and approximately 95% of all candidates lie in a range of plus or minus two standard deviations from the mean. In order to compare the standard deviations for different components, the standard deviation (scaled) should be expressed as a percentage of the maximum mark (scaled).