



## **General Certificate of Secondary Education**

# **Geography 3032 Full Course** *Specification B*

**3032/1F      Paper 1 Foundation Tier**

## **Report on the Examination** *2007 examination - June series*

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**3032/1F – Paper 1 Foundation Tier**

The paper differentiated well and most questions were accessible to the vast majority of candidates. This specification has a relatively high allocation of marks for subject content and this still remains the candidates' weakest area. Where a question was testing understanding the candidates were more successful. The place specific nature of this specification means that the use of case studies will always be a feature of the examination papers. For the first time this year candidates were informed, both on the front of the paper and before the first question, to make use of their case studies whenever possible. Centres should bring this to their candidates' notice and encourage them not to restrict their use of case studies to a question where they are specifically asked to use them. Examination technique also remains an area on which centres could profitably spend time. Better understanding of key command words such as 'describe' and 'explain' would have a beneficial effect on many candidates' answers. Other profitable areas for centres to emphasise would be the correct definitions of the words in the list of geographical terms within the specification, the difference between annotating and labelling a sketch map and the more careful reading of questions. This is to ensure that candidates do not fail to make use of the stimulus material provided, when it is a requirement of the question. As mentioned in a number of previous examination reports the word 'pollution' fails to get any credit unless it is qualified. The other word frequently used by many candidates is 'better' when referring to factors such as 'climate', 'jobs', and 'standard of living'. Such use of the word does not gain credit, even at a basic Level 1. The use of the published mark scheme allows centres to recognise the 'trigger' that allows a candidate's answer to be considered for a move up from Level 1 to Level 2. Candidates should be encouraged to write linked statements or developed points, which will give their answers the necessary clarity to reach Level 2.

**Question 1**

This was generally well answered, with most candidates achieving at least 50% correct. The weakest answers by far were for part (g) dealing with 'break-of-bulk'. Very few candidates recognised that such locations are typified by products being broken down or split up. Other examples of candidates' poor knowledge of definitions were 'agri-business' and 'urban renewal'. These are all listed in the list of geographical terms candidates are required to know for this specification. Specification B is unique among the geography specifications offered by AQA because it includes a list in the specification documentation. Centres should use this to their advantage with their candidates. It was pleasing to see how many candidates were able to use census data to recognise the correct urban land use zone in part (e).

**Question 2**

Unlike in previous years, candidates seemed better prepared for the physical geography topics. The cross sections were invariably asymmetrical in shape and usually the same way round as in the photograph. There was good knowledge of the position of the river cliff and the slip-off slope. Centres should encourage candidates to make the position of these features as precise as possible. Most candidates were able to show a good understanding of river processes in their answer to part (c).

**Question 3**

This question was the least well answered on the paper. Candidates here could not recognise that there is a difference between the command words, 'describe' and 'explain' in parts (b) and (c). Most candidates in part (c) attempted a more detailed version of their answer to part (b). There was very little evidence of an understanding of relief rainfall and even those candidates who did attempt an explanation answered largely in a very generalised way, ignoring Figure 6 as a means of making their answer more place specific.

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**Question 4**

Centres should discourage candidates from using the term 'fertile' or 'infertile' when referring to soils as there needs to be some kind of elaboration if it is to gain credit. Candidates' knowledge of the properties of chalky boulder clay was not strong. This is perhaps because a Cambridgeshire Fenland farm features in the textbook most commonly used in conjunction with the teaching of this specification. Part (c) was an attempt by the examiner to indicate that the knowledge of precise climate statistics was required when undertaking a study of farming in East Anglia. This question showed the clear inability or reluctance of many candidates to learn factual information. The most common response in each case was "it was good for the crops". Many candidates felt that 3°C was warm enough for crops to grow in winter. The climate facts quoted were chosen as being representative of those given in the majority of textbooks covering arable farming in East Anglia. The effect of climate on agriculture in this part the UK is a very common question. Centres might consider using this question as a framework for the teaching of the topic.

**Question 5**

Inner city renewal is a topic which most candidates understand well. The major weakness came in part (c), where candidates sometimes failed to show how the improvements impacted on peoples' lives which meant their answers were restricted to Level 1. It is still disappointing that examiners infrequently see evidence of candidates' use of highlighting to identify key words and phrases in a question. Centres should encourage this technique to ensure candidates answer all parts of a question. This should also reduce the amount of irrelevant material candidates include in their answers.

**Question 6**

Part (a) had been poorly answered in previous years, but it presented few problems this year and candidates were able to focus on the physical and human aims of National Parks. Most candidates could name two glacial processes, although there are still some candidates who consider the weathering of the rock by frost shattering to be a process of erosion. It was pleasing that centres had obviously emphasised that a definition of a 'honeypot' should include the notion of a *large* number of tourists visiting a particular site. There was a need in part (c)(iii) for an indication of the personnel/groups involved in the conflict and what caused the conflict. Generally, this was a question that showed even the weakest candidates were able to score well when the question included some stimulus material that tested basic interpretation and understanding. Closer reading of question 6(c)(iv) would have allowed candidates to score more highly if they had recognised that there was a need to relate their answer to the impact on the environment. This would also have meant that fewer candidates would have failed to focus on lake issues, choosing instead to write on improvements to villages and roads. Question 6(d) was generally well answered particularly if they chose the farming rather than the employment option. These answers frequently made use of linked statements giving the candidates access to Level 2.

**Question 7**

Centres are covering global warming well and so candidates were able to answer part (b)(i) well. The drawing of sketch maps is a skill that appears to have been lost by today's GCSE candidates. Many ignored the requirement to use the O.S. extract to add information to that provided in part (b)(ii). Those who did attempt to draw something often failed to recognise how the numbering of the grid lines could help in this task. Centres should revisit the list of geographical skills listed in the specification, where the drawing of sketch maps is a clear requirement and the difference between labels and annotations need to be emphasised to candidates. The example given did not appear to be as useful to the candidates as it was hoped. This question was only partly set to test map reading. It was hoped that the candidates' case study knowledge of a coal-powered power station would have been of use here, though it

was unlikely that any had specifically studied the one at Didcot. It was therefore hoped that it would have been recognised that the railways rather than the road would have been used for the transportation of the coal. In (c)(ii) many candidates appear to have taken little more than a cursory glance at the map extract and so failed to quote map evidence in their answers. Candidates would benefit if centres showed them how to dissect a question into its different parts and thus ensure that they attempt to satisfy all parts of the question. The use of linked statements meant that there were some good answers to the final part of the question.

## **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

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