AQA

ASSESSMENT and
QUALIFICATIONS
ALLIANCE

General Certificate of Secondary Education

Geography 3032 Full Course
Specification B

3032/2F   Written Paper

Report on the Examination
2007 examination - June series

3032/2F – Paper 2 Foundation Tier

General

The quality of work in 2007 was very similar to or marginally better than the work in 2006. Nearly all of the questions seemed accessible to candidates and consequently there were fewer questions where no attempts were made to answer the question. However, there was a lack of detail and quality in many of the answers to the higher mark questions, although a few candidates displayed an excellent grasp of the subject and achieved high marks. Only a small number of candidates were able to write in linked statements. Where candidates did write using linked statements, they invariably accessed Level 2 and gained more marks. As in recent years knowledge of geographical locations was of a poor standard and the maps mainly produced weak responses. These are areas that centres should concentrate on which would be of benefit to their candidates.

Detailed comments on questions deserving of special mention

Question 1 was probably the best-answered question on the paper. A high percentage of candidates were able to make good use of the photograph of the squatter settlement in 4(b) and there were some good answers in 1(a)(ii) on the greenhouse effect. However, the planning issue in questions 2(a)(iii) and (iv) proved beyond the majority of candidates. Invariably the only marks awarded were for low level comments on either flooding in Rotterdam/Europoort or inner city decline in Paris.

There seemed to be many vague, confused and over generalised answers on a number of questions, which rarely scored more than 1 mark. This was particularly true on 3(e) on industrial pollution and 4(d)(iii) on types of international aid.

The two six mark questions on Amazonia and squatter settlements afforded the candidates a chance to develop a detailed geographical answer. It was disappointing to see that few candidates wrote beyond deforestation/habitats on 3(b)(iv). It was, however, pleasing to see a few candidates using their knowledge to write about specific pollution incidents like Lake Biwa and Minamata Bay which they had clearly studied in preparation for the examination. There seemed also to be an improvement in the use of descriptive adjectives to describe soils and candidates were able to use words like 'thin', 'sandy' and 'limestone' rather than using words such as 'good' or 'bad' in response to soils.

Question 1
Question 1 was generally well answered with many candidates gaining good marks. Questions (a)(ii) and (b)(ii) were generally well answered, although there were a significant number of candidates who believed CO_2 destroys the ozone layer. In part (c)(ii) the majority of candidates were able to name a Japanese TNC which produces electrical components, Sony being the most popular response. However, some gave examples of car companies and only a few could give valid reasons for moving production to the Pacific Rim in part (c)(iii) or the benefits of such investment to the Pacific Rim countries in part (c)(iv).

Question 2
Question (a)(i) showed weak locational knowledge. It was surprising that the majority of students could not locate their chosen conurbation on the map of Europe, Rotterdam/Europoort was the most accurately located region and the Ruhr conurbation the least accurate.

Questions (a)(ii), (iii) and (iv) were poorly answered with little specific geographical knowledge offered by the majority of candidates. A large number of candidates made no attempt to answer

questions (a)(iii) and (a)(iv). Of those that did attempt it, a significant number of candidates gave no area (and gained no credit) or believed their conurbation to be the Mezzogiorno or even Bangladesh. Very few candidates mentioned a specific planning issue. Of those that did the majority chose Rotterdam/Europoort as their conurbation. A common misconception amongst candidates was the belief that 'flooding' was a planning issue in the Ruhr.

There were some good answers to question (b)(ii) on the difficulties of farming in the Mezzogiorno, with many candidates able to write in linked statements. The best candidates were able to name the soils and rock type and develop their answers with good detail. It was encouraging to see not only the use of linked statements on this question but also the ability to give accurate descriptions of the soils.

Questions 2(c) and (d) were less encouraging. Answers lacked real geographical content. Only the most able reached Level 2. Far too many candidates wrote about unspecified pollution (which gained no credit) and few candidates could distinguish between the 'environment' and the 'economy'.

Question 3
Many candidates scored poorly on (b)(i) because they gave month by month accounts of the climate and failed to recognise a climatic pattern. There was often confusion on (b)(ii) and (b)(iii) about the terms and a significant number of candidates wrongly believed that shifting cultivators 'plant' the trees.

The answers to question (b)(iv) were disappointing. Many candidates were only able to state that 'trees had been cut down' or they erred into global warming (which gained no credit unless the answer showed how it affected the environment of Amazonia). There were very few linked statements and few answers contained any real geographical information, so only the most able reached Level 2. Of the latter it was encouraging to find a few candidates who not only had an excellent knowledge of the environmental problems but also wrote about recent developments aimed at improving the environment, such as afforestation and forest protection schemes.

Most candidates were able to access (d)(i) and full marks were common, although a minority erroneously believed that all the motor vehicle factories were on the coast.

On part (e) the majority of candidates lacked any specific knowledge about industrial pollution in Japan and there was frequently confusion as to which atmospheric gases contributed to global warming and to the formation of acid rain. Many believed they were one and the same.

Question 4
Accurate answers were common in part (b) on the condition in squatter settlements and it was pleasing to see many candidates access Level 2 and make use of linked statements in their answers. The answers to parts (d) and (e) were disappointing. In part (d) very few candidates appeared to understand the term 'voluntary aid' (often believing it to be voluntary 'work') and the majority had little appreciation of the types of international aid. In part (e) few candidates had sufficient knowledge to enable them to reach Level 2. Many candidates did not realise the question was about 'managing' the consequences and wrote about renewable energy or lapsed into information about the causes of global warming (which gained no credit).

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the results statistics page of the AQA website at www.aqa.org.uk/over/stat.html