



General Certificate of Secondary Education

Geography 3032 Full Course *Specification B*

3032/1F – Paper 1 Foundation Tier

Report on the Examination

2008 examination - June series

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3032/1F – Paper 1 Foundation Tier

There was a considerable drop in the entry for this component this year. It is not clear whether this was the result of centres changing to another specification, or no longer entering some Foundation Tier candidates for geography as a result of the widening options available at Key Stage 4. The examiners are still seeing some very poor answers. This specification, with its emphasis on place, has a strong factual content. Less able candidates have considerable difficulty with learning factual information in any depth of detail. This year's paper required knowledge of a number of the case studies listed in the specification content. This tier would not require the level of detail expected on the Higher Tier where a Level 3 was available, but there was the need for some clarity in the candidates' answers if they were to reach Level 2. The examiners are still seeing far too many vague generalisations. Centres are reminded that the key to achieving a Level 2 response is the writing of linked statements.

Question 1

Testing knowledge of the specialist terms listed in the specification content is a regular feature of the examination papers over the last few years. Specification B is unique among the GCSE Geography courses offered by AQA in having a list of geographical terms. Centres should ensure that candidates understand and can define these terms precisely. 'Break-of-bulk' and 'heavy industry' are terms which these candidates found difficult. They were much better at linking terms to a definition that was given rather than coming up with their own. Question 1 is used to widen the specification coverage on an examination where there are no optional questions. Foundation Tier candidates have difficulty in jumping from one topic area to another.

Question 2

Apart from 2(a)(i) this question was generally well answered. Figure 1 and the first part of the question was designed to help candidates by giving them some ideas to use in their answer to 2(b). This aim was not achieved. Candidates did not really appreciate what was meant by the growth of a city, instead they concentrated on urban morphology or function. Examiners allowed credit if growth was considered from either a historical or a modern perspective. To reach Level 2 there was a requirement that there was some link with the named urban area. In most cases what was written could have applied to any town.

Question 3

The response to the aerial photograph was varied. Some candidates saw the word Camp and immediately thought in terms of a tourist feature and farmers' attempts to diversify. Others thought it was set-aside land, despite it not being shaded as such. Most candidates answered part (a)(iii) correctly. Most focused on the creation of additional farmland but a variety of other acceptable answers was identified. Most candidates attempted part (iv). Less able candidates invariably scored one mark, whilst a significant proportion were able to produce quality answers with the realisation that speed and cost were the key factors in locating processing factories close to the farms. Perhaps it was expecting too much at this level to expect reference to the perishable nature of peas and sugar beet's bulky nature. Only a small proportion of candidates scored two marks in part 3(b). Most candidates focused on the English Woodland Grant Scheme but several thought that this was about existing woodland. There was very little evidence of SSSIs or Environmental Stewardship schemes being understood. It is hoped that centres are emphasising that the CAP is now largely concerned with environmental matters rather than quotas and guaranteed prices.

Question 4

Most candidates answered the first two parts correctly. Part (a)(iii) was an example of a question where candidates were satisfied to answer by means of basic statements and so remained in Level 1. Linked statements were seldom in evidence. All too common were comments such as “there are car parks”, “they are easy to get to”. Centres should train candidates in examination technique and show how easy it would be to turn these two ideas into a linked statement and so move their answer into Level 2. There were very few candidates who discussed the problems faced by shops in the CBD. Many regarded the new developments as redevelopments on brownfield sites, ignoring the fact that the question referred to new shopping developments elsewhere.

Question 5

Relatively few candidates could name a nuclear power station. Precise case study detail was not a requirement of this question, but those candidates that used one, such as Heysham, invariably scored more highly. There is a widespread view among these candidates that all nuclear power stations are radioactive or are likely to explode at any minute. The majority of candidates were able to offer valid reasons as to why the production of electricity from renewable sources is set to remain low in the next few years. Most focused on the inefficiency and difficulties of using renewable fuels rather than on the positive benefits of continued use of fossil fuels, in that they are cheaper and we have plenty of these resources left.

Question 6

Most candidates had little difficulty in completing the industrial system diagram. A large proportion of the candidates were able to describe the distribution of Assisted Areas shown on Figure 6. Most used compass directions correctly, with relatively few attempting to name regions e.g. Merseyside, Cornwall. Many of the candidates must live in one of the areas shown on the map. It is hoped that centres do not consider the impact of government policy on industrial location a peripheral area of the specification and give it less emphasis than factors such as raw materials and markets. Nowadays, it is probably the single most important factor. Hardly any candidates seemed to have any real knowledge of this topic. The usual answer to (b)(iii) was “give money”. Very few candidates had any case study knowledge of a chemical industry on a river estuary. Many could not even name an example. This question was also an example of candidates failing to make use of linked statements. The lack of knowledge and understanding is reflected by the frequency of basic comments being offered, e.g. near workforce, near motorways, on flat land. Water was almost universally used for cooling – not a significant factor in the location of a chemical works. There was very little reference to raw materials or market needs. Answers to part (c)(i) confirmed the impression reached in past years, that many candidates think that the University of Cambridge is located in the M4 corridor. Part 6(c)(ii) was the best answered of the questions dealing with industrial location.

Question 7

The map reading questions were generally well answered. This is an area which has seen an improvement over recent years. It was pleasing that most candidates scored well on part (a)(v) which required the recognition of glacial features from their contour patterns. It is therefore all the more surprising that candidates at this level, and perhaps in contrast to candidates entered for GCSE Geography Specification A, find so much difficulty in answering physical geography questions. There were many who did not attempt Question 7(b). Those who did frequently could not complete the sequence in the formation of a glacial trough, even if they mentioned the glacial processes involved. There was careless shading seen in (c)(i). For example, slanting the shading in Colton the opposite way to that shown in the key. There was evidence of poor geography in (b)(i), as a significant number of candidates, when referring to the map, used expressions such as “on the left of the map” instead of “in the west” or “on the edge” instead of “on the coast”. Centres can help their candidates by reminding them of the importance of using

appropriate geographical terminology. There still remains little evidence of candidates underlining key words or phrases in a question. Centres should give advice to candidates about how they can deconstruct a question. In 7(b) there was plenty of evidence of candidates misreading the question. As a result they disqualified themselves from obtaining higher marks. A significant number of candidates failed to focus on problems associated with 'second homes', instead choosing to writing about general problems created by tourists such as noise and litter. It should be pointed out to candidates that most tourists in the Lake District, particularly those with second homes, could not be held responsible for those kinds of pollution.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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