



General Certificate of Secondary Education

Geography 3032 Full Course *Specification B*

3032/2H – Paper 2 Higher Tier

Report on the Examination *2008 examination - June series*

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General

The higher paper achieved a wide range of marks and differentiated well between candidates. It enabled more able candidates to score highly and show a thorough knowledge of the topics, although only a minority of candidates were able to gain maximum marks on the 9 mark questions. The paper seemed accessible to most candidates and very few questions went unanswered. Only the most ablest candidates scored highly on questions 3(b)(i) and 3(b)(iii), where the instructional words on the questions were misinterpreted by many, and on Question 5(b) where explanations were required for urban growth in LEDCs. These proved to be very discriminatory questions and centres should stress to their candidates the importance of reading the questions carefully before answering.

It was pleasing to see that knowledge of places was much improved this year. Also candidates were able to respond more accurately than in previous years to the command words such as 'describe', 'explain' and 'compare'. This was evident on question 2(c)(ii) where the candidates were asked to compare the imports and exports of Japan and on Question 5(a) where candidates had to describe the changes in urban growth. However, there are still a significant number of candidates who ignore these instructional words and centres are asked to stress to candidates the importance of responding accurately to different command words.

Candidates were again presented with the phrase 'and with your own knowledge' on a number of questions but, as in previous years, many candidates restricted themselves to the data provided and, consequently, were unable to access the higher levels. Many candidates failed to use their own knowledge to write about the physical factors leading to migration from the Mezzogiorno in part 3(b)(i). However, on Question 4(c)(i) many good candidates relied solely on their own knowledge and failed to make use of the stimulus material in the photograph and were unable to reach Level 2. Candidates are therefore reminded that when the question asks for 'use of the Figure and their own knowledge' they should use both the stimulus material and their own knowledge to access the higher levels.

Question 1

Question 1 was generally well answered with many candidates achieving high marks. Good location knowledge was shown on the two maps. However, the compound bar graph on question 1(a)(v) was frequently misinterpreted (as in previous years) and on 1(b)(ii) many candidates were unable to recognise the climate graph as Mediterranean. On part (b)(i) many candidates failed to describe the climatic pattern over the year and simply quoted monthly temperatures and rainfall figures. Consequently, they failed to access Level 2. More able candidates accurately described the seasonal changes in climate and appreciated that summers were hot with a lack of rain and winters were mild with high rainfall. Centres are encouraged to practice this type of graph interpretation to enable candidates to have a better understanding of the climatic characteristics of the different regions in the specification.

Question 2

It was pleasing to note that many candidates were able to locate accurately the features of their chosen conurbation on the outline maps provided in Question 2(a). However, part 2(b)(iii) proved to be a very discriminatory question. It provided many vague answers which concentrated on the positive aspects of living on the coast rather than the problems of the interior. Although most candidates appreciated that there were mountains in the interior, few associated the interior with volcanoes or could link the mountains to any problems. Strong candidates were able to provide excellent answers by giving specific detail about the problems of farming, transport, accessibility, summer and winter temperatures and volcanic eruptions in

the interior of Japan. In (c)(ii) good comparisons were given by many candidates and it was pleasing to note that many candidates had taken the advice given in last year's report about responding to instructional words. However, there were still a significant number of candidates who gave separate accounts and, consequently, scored low marks. Therefore, candidates are reminded that they should make their comparisons clear, using linking words like 'whereas' and 'however', when answering this type of question. In question (d)(iii) most candidates gave the low death rate but surprisingly few were able to recognise the low birth rate in Country A.

Question 3

There was a good understanding of the main characteristics of the EU periphery on question 2(a)(i) and of the port infrastructure on question 2(c)(ii). But on questions 2(b)(i) and 2(b)(iii) many candidates failed to respond to the instructional wording of the question. On question (b)(i) many candidates failed to appreciate that the question required the description of physical (not human) factors which have led to migration. Less able candidates either simply repeated the information given on the sketch or concentrated on human problems or both. Only the most able candidates used their own knowledge, as well as the sketch, to give good descriptions of physical problems such as the permeability of the limestone, the difficulty of using machinery on the steep slopes, the hot summers with a lack of rain. Question (b)(iii) also proved to be a most discriminatory question and provided some disappointing answers with many candidates achieving only Level 1. The majority of candidates were unable to respond correctly to the words 'farming practices' and much irrelevant material was included. However, some more able candidates gave details of recent improvements in practices, such as growing new crops like salad and citrus fruits, the change from growing grapes to producing their own wines on the farms and the use of irrigation systems. Such answers showed an excellent knowledge of recent geography and gained high credit. However, even the most ablest candidates found it difficult to access Level 3 on this question. Candidates are reminded to read the questions carefully before answering. The question on the English port produced much better responses than in previous years but there are still a number of candidates who write about the facilities on board the boats rather than the facilities at the port. A significant minority of candidates believe that the port of Dover is synonymous with the Channel tunnel.

Question 4

There were some very good answers on Amazonia in questions 4(b)(i) and (ii) and candidates clearly had a good understanding of the adaptations of the vegetation and the environmental problems that occur when it is removed. However, question (b)(iii) was disappointing and even the more able candidates showed a lack of appreciation of ecosystems and sustainable development. Only a minority of candidates managed to go beyond the data given in Figure 13. To access Level 2 candidates were expected to link the developments to show an appreciation of habitats, global warming, river and air pollution, deforestation and soil erosion. Question (c)(ii) was similarly disappointing and the full sequence of activities in the farming year was not known by an overwhelming number of candidates. The majority of answers contained little information other than planting and harvesting of rice. Centres are therefore reminded that candidates are expected to know the full sequence of activities in rice cultivation. There was, however, excellent knowledge and understanding of the benefits and problems of the Green Revolution on question (c)(iii) from many candidates.

Question 5

Question 5 produced some very competent answers, especially on parts 5(a), (c) and (e) but questions (b) and (d) proved to be much more difficult. Question 5(b) presented an opportunity for candidates to write about push and pull factors. However, many candidates failed to appreciate that push/pull factors were involved in urban growth and often wrote about the growth of LEDCs or simply described the data on the graphs. Even when candidates did understand the question their answers were surprisingly lacking in detail and often contained

little more than 'people are looking for jobs'. Only a small minority of candidates wrote about the problems of the rural areas and even fewer about the differences between birth rate and death rate in urban areas. Question (d) also proved to be a discriminatory question and there were many vague, confused and factually incorrect answers (including CO₂ being prevented from leaving the atmosphere and the sun's rays getting stuck in the ozone layer). Many answers showed a complete lack of understanding of the effects of the atmosphere on incoming and outgoing radiation.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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