GCSE 2003
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ASSESSMENT and QUALIFICATIONS ALLIANCE

Report on the Examination

Geography
Specification B

- 3032 Full Course
- 3037 Short Course

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General Comments

In this first year of the new Specification, it was pleasing to see how well many centres coped with the new marking criteria. Moderators were impressed with the variety of coursework produced and the breadth of knowledge displayed by many of the candidates. There were a number of outstanding enquiries in evidence. It is appreciated that the logistics behind organising fieldwork visits are becoming more complex: staffing, cover, finance, safety, transport are all difficult and time-consuming issues for a Head of Department. This, added to the fact that Geography teachers are at the mercy of the British climate, makes it remarkable that departments produced such an impressive range of quality work.

Teacher-led enquiries were by far the most common format. 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 easy opportunities for them to re-visit the sites. As expected, a 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 identified. Furthermore, these tend 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.

It is encouraging to report that a large number of centres obviously made use of the Coursework Advisers or attended AQA training sessions and/or Standardisation meetings. The quality of enquiries produced and the detailed annotation that accompanied some of this work suggests that the advice they received and the materials they were given were put to great effect in creating new coursework topics or adapting existing coursework to the new guidelines.

Administration

There is no doubt that this year there were problems regarding administration that were in some cases beyond the control of the centres. The fact that this was the first year of a new Specification; the late allocation of moderators to some centres and the supply of the correct documentation; the completion of new proforma sheets and new sampling procedures, for some, all combined to make it a difficult start for some centres and, indeed, some moderators. The whole process was further complicated and prolonged by the very late arrival of scripts from some centres.

On a more positive note, AQA moderators were a little less frustrated than in previous years in that centres knew exactly the specific sample to send. The new sampling procedure worked well and made sure that the number and composition of the sample sent from the centre was correct in the majority of cases.

The detailed attention needed to efficiently negotiate the administrative process cannot be overstated. Whilst some centres were quite superb in all aspects of administration and justifiably deserve credit, others failed to meet even the basic requirements and thus delayed the whole moderation process.

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 EDI 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 printouts) 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. In one or two cases, centres were using out of date proformas and, as a result, did not provide all the information required. **The Centre Declaration Sheet should also accompany the sample.**

- Some coursework is being 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 the Board's 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 breaks in the post it would be appreciated. Equally, **there is no need to send the work 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 the 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.

- A number of candidates were given zero marks for their 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 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 relate 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. But, a minority of centres provided only limited evidence that internal assessment had taken place. Examples of poor practice included: just marks on the CRF; a number of ticks in the body of the work or a few unhelpful comments scattered throughout the work that bore no relation to the content or the mark scheme. These centres need to be reminded **that annotation is a requirement of the GCSE Mandatory Code of Practice.** Centres will hopefully realise that far from being an unnecessary chore, annotation helps their candidates by focusing their marking and making it more likely that moderation will confirm the centre's marks.

- 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 has not been given priority and moderators are spending more time dealing with the problems associated with administration than they are on assessing the quality of the Geography. It is also important that **the internal standardisation process carried out by the centre is rigorous.** If there are problems with the marking, it is sometimes the result of one teacher's marking not being in line with the rest of the department.

Marking Criteria

Many centres successfully applied the new 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 the majority of 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 suggest that candidates include, within their introductions, a glossary of terms. This is a useful idea but it must be remembered that 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 understanding 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 lacked the normal conventions. Understanding was delivered through background information, scene setting or a series of chapters headed 'theory'. In each case, the theoretical basis of the work was compartmentalised 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 a range of 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 the justification of this unique element 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 extensions 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, preferring to spend most of their time discussing the advantages and disadvantages of each technique or the merits of different sampling procedures.

The following would all prohibit progression into the Higher Level, even if the candidate had produced an individual piece of work:

- 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.

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 should be actually used in the investigation to collect primary or secondary data, unless there is a very good reason why that particular method did not prove possible. If that is the case, mention of it could be made in the evaluation sections. Centres were awarding 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.

Data Presentation

Centres are to be congratulated on 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 a wide range of appropriate 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 continuum which takes account of the accuracy, appropriateness, range and complexity of the types of presentation being used. 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 did not seem 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 Excel produced 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 with 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. Centres and candidates should ensure, at the planning stage, that the data produced is suitable for being represented by higher order skills.

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 highlighting patterns or anomalies. They then went on to provide explanations, demonstrate links between the data sets, and draw valid conclusions that related to the original hypothesis.

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.

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.

Teacher comments and annotation within the body of the work would suggest 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 is 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, might be a reflection of the particular location and time when the enquiry was undertaken and so cannot be considered applicable in the wider context.

Evaluation presented a problem for some centres with candidates having a tendency to write in congratulatory terms rather than highlighting limitations. Any evaluation statements tended to be vague and generic rather than detailed and specific to the enquiry. In the weaker enquiries, 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 important point to remember about this section is that it is not about making judgements regarding the quality of the Geography but is an opportunity to provide a critical appraisal of the effectiveness of the enquiry process.

Summary

The annual report, by design, records this year's findings and gives guidance as to how to avoid future pitfalls. It would be an injustice to view the document as purely negative comment. Public recognition should go to all fellow hardworking committed Geography teachers who have tackled the new Specification with professionalism. In the majority of cases, coursework enquiries were worthy of great merit, testament to the youngsters' hard work and the teachers who guide them.

Paper 1 – Foundation Tier (3032/1F)

General Comments

While this was the first year of the new specification, the entry appears to have been relatively constant from the former centres entering candidates for the NEAB B examination. There were some differences from that examination, and in writing the new specification the opportunity was taken to make modifications based on some of the comments and criticisms made. Centres need to ensure that they are fully aware of what is in the new specification and not to assume that every thing is exactly the same as the NEAB B examination, even if the topics covered are the same. Furthermore as a result of the process of setting the 2003 examination there have been further refinements for 2004. The 2004 regulations will remain in use as long as this specification is on offer. One of the major changes between 2003 and 2004 is that there is no longer a difference in the geographical terms that can be used on the Higher and the Foundation Tiers.

3032/2F was accessible to candidates of all abilities and the variety of questions allowed most to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding. Candidates were far more comfortable in answering questions on topics such as agriculture and energy than they were on hydrology, industrial location and issues in the urban environment. The biggest disappointment was that candidates had a poor knowledge of place. Centres had presumably chosen this specification because of its place emphasis, yet this did not come through in the candidates' answers on those questions requiring knowledge of places exemplars, especially those where there was a requirement for their study in the regulations. The questions in particular were (4)(b) on honeypots, (6)(e) on urban growth and (7)(d)(ii) on the supply of water to urban areas. The failure in these questions explained why there were very few very high marks. There was a good spread of marks generally apart from the very top end. The less able candidates accessed marks through the multiple choice question, the need for alternative answers in (2)(b) and those where they were asked to complete boxes as in (5)(a) and (7)(a). We hope that guesswork was not the order of the day for these candidates! There were very few blank spaces and there was no indication that the candidates were unable to complete the paper in the time available.

Question 1

This was well answered with most candidates achieving at least half marks. The parts which caused the greatest difficulties were (e), (f) and (g).

Question 2

Virtually every candidate could read 50% of the pie chart, although a few gave a fraction as their answer. A large number thought East Anglia was an upland farming area with all its associated problems because they thought that the region was mountainous!

Question 3

Despite the question not stating how many ticks were required, most candidates got it right at two and ticked the correct two. No candidate ticked the whole lot. A pleasing number of candidates developed the one disadvantage of coal-fired power stations and so were able to score the second mark. (b) and (c) were both well answered. In (d) many candidates failed to realise the importance of environmental as opposed to economic disadvantages of renewable energy production.

Question 4

This was not particularly well done. Many saw the Lake District as an island on the map – perhaps that was a fault of the way the figure was drawn on the paper. However, as one of the specified regions for study, one would have hoped that candidates would not have made this fundamental mistake. The answers to (a) and (b) tended to be very vague with little evidence of the use of the

stimulus material. Here was an example of the candidates' failure to refer to case study material as indicated in the specification. In (c), many candidates failed to realise that a conflict involves two opposing sides, in this case locals and tourists. They were able to choose an appropriate comment from the cartoon but were limited to one mark because they did not state what the conflict was. This question therefore proved to be a good discriminator.

Question 5

The style of question in (5)(a) suited the candidates targeted on this tier and so many, even the less able scored well here. Some interesting answers were given for (5)(b). These included ' Ethrow', 'Looton', John Lennon and London airports. A simple definition of footloose industry proved beyond most candidates, despite glossaries of words being provided in the specification.

Question 6

The mapwork was well answered. In (b)(i) many merely lifted the figure and did nothing with them failing to recognise the instruction in the question to 'use' the figures. There were many lists in (b)(ii) giving Level 1 type answers but few managed to reach Level 2. Candidates were generally able to clearly describe the changes shown in the graphs in Figure 8, although many merely repeated the answers again in (ii). Examiners were not convinced that candidates were happy with the concept of commuting. The evidence from (d) was that traffic problems and solutions had been well covered in the centres. Very few candidates displayed any case study knowledge of an urban area which has grown as required by (e). Some could not even distinguish between rural and urban areas with detailed factual accounts of the Lake District, Devon and Cornwall. Manchester and Liverpool got very few references! The mark scheme allowed candidates to consider this question in terms of historical reasons for growth or modern growth associated with urban sprawl. The specification appears clear. It is the historical growth of a named urban area that should be studied.

Question 7

This question was generally well done but it proved to be a good discriminator. (a) was another question where the style allowed candidates of all abilities to show their knowledge. There was a great deal of misunderstanding of the formation of ox-bow lakes. It is important to recognise that even at this level, the candidates needed to show understanding of the processes involved in their formation. Many candidates failed to use Figure 11 as a prompt to help them draw the next stage in the formation of the ox-bow lake. It may be another example, too often seen on this paper, of candidates failing to read the question sufficiently carefully enough. The definition of 'hydraulic erosion', although specifically mentioned in the specification, was very poorly answered. Flood control solutions on the other hand were generally well known. In (d) many candidates failed to recognise that the numerical scale was given in millions, and so did not gain any credit in their answer. (7)(d) proved to be a good discriminator. There were some very vague answers showing a complete lack of understanding. Here again there was a missed opportunity for candidates to use case study exemplification. Keilder Water is well documented in the textbooks and would have proved a very good case study to use in this question.

The paper overall appeared to discriminate well, testing the more able and encouraging the less able candidates to demonstrate what they could do.

Paper 1 – Higher Tier (3032/1H)

While this was the first year of the new specification the entry appears to have been relatively constant from the former centres entering candidates for the NEAB B examination. There were some differences from that examination, and in writing the new specification, the opportunity was taken to make modifications based on some of the comments and criticisms made. Centres need to ensure that they are fully aware of what is in the new specification and not to assume that every thing is exactly the same as the NEAB B examination, even if the topics covered are the same. Furthermore as a result of the process of setting the 2003 examination there have been further refinements for 2004. The 2004 regulations will remain in use as long as this specification is on offer. One of the major changes between 2003 and 2004 is that there is no longer a difference in the geographical terms that can be used on the Higher and the Foundation Tiers.

The evidence from the scripts showed that candidates were failing to reach the higher marks on this paper. The reason for this appeared to be their very poor knowledge of place. In a specification where there is a greater need for locational knowledge than in the others offered by the Examining group it was very disappointing. Little evidence was seen of specific factual information about particular parts of the United Kingdom. This was particularly evident in those sections where specific regions for study, such as the Lake District and East Anglia, are a requirement of the specification. Equally, case studies are clearly required in some questions as justified by the demands of the specification. It was these questions where candidates were failing to give the detail that comes from a good knowledge of place that is necessary if they are to access the higher marks available for a Level 3 answer. This led to a bunching of marks as there were disappointingly few papers seen where there was evidence of competent handling of clear information. On the more positive side, there were few blank spaces and there was no indication that the candidates were unable to complete the paper in the time available.

Question 1

This question proved a positive start to the examination paper. Very few candidates had any difficulty with the instructions. Most candidates managed to achieve five correct answers. The two parts proving the most difficult were (c) and (f)

Question 2

This was very poorly answered. (a) and (b) showed appropriate grasp of geographical skills. (c) on the other hand was a prime example where detailed knowledge of a specified region of study was rarely in evidence. Candidates could not give accurate climatic statistics and many ignored the instructions, giving factors other than climate such as relief, which affects wheat cultivation in East Anglia. A typical answer would refer to 'warm summers', 'cool winters' and 'low rainfall' unsupported by data and giving no indication about why they were important for the cultivation of wheat. In (d) the Common Agricultural policy was the usual answer - the fact that it probably has been the major cause of environmental damage was obviously not appreciated. Those who tried to consider the attempts to reduce environmental damage struggled to come up with a policy. There were some correct responses such as 'set aside' but other gave non-policy answers such as putting back hedges or reducing the use of pesticides.

Question 3

It is important that centres read the section documenting the geographical skills to be tested as well as the content detail in the specification. The command word 'describe' was frequently ignored in (a) and candidates tried to explain the distribution of coal-fired power stations without making use of the atlas extract. Many used the space to explain costs of transport or the need for water. Many candidates referred to stations on the lower sections of rivers as 'coastal'. (b)(i) and (ii) were generally well answered. In (b)(i), most candidates scored at least one mark, with 'non-renewable'

and the 'increased use of gas' being the main reasons. Large numbers, however seem to think that the UK's coal resources are almost exhausted. Most gained two marks in (b)(ii). A significant number referred to high costs without specifying 'set-up' costs. Too many spoke of 'inefficiency' without elaborating.

Question 4

(a)(i) was well answered. In (ii) there were far too many Level 1 answers. This is an area of the specification where it is clear that a honeypot location in the Lake District needs to be studied in detail. The most examiners saw here was a named location with very little information about such areas as Windermere or Bowness, which would have proved a good example to use in answering this question. In (c), many candidates failed to realise that a conflict involves two opposing sides, in this case locals and tourists. They were able to choose an appropriate comment from the cartoon but were limited to one mark because they did not state what the conflict was. This question therefore proved to be a good discriminator.

Question 5

This was not well answered and was the only question where there were a significant number of blank spaces with nothing attempted. This is a specified regional study, yet (a), requiring detailed locational knowledge was virtually non-existent. The examiners are sure that centres must start the study of this topic with the drawing of a sketch map to show the main locations of the factors/ towns important in the growth of the High-Tec industry in the M4 Corridor. The marks gained were limited to one of the towns or cities being correctly named, sometimes with the addition of the word 'universities'. Most candidates managed to gain the four factor marks often unearthed from rambling statements. Why is the existence of a port at Bristol considered such an important locating factor in an industry where import of raw materials is not of any significance?

Question 6

Good map reading skills were in evidence in (a). The street patterns were usually well identified, with the exceptions of those describing houses, where rows of terraced houses could equate to streets but curved houses were harder to justify! Inner city problems were well known but a number continued the inner city into the rural urban fringe There were, however, some excellent answers which brought out the spiral of decline in inner city areas. In (b) most were able to identify the developments to achieve Level 1, but only a minority produced the detailed descriptions necessary for Level 2. Many candidates failed to recognise the significance of the command word 'describe' and so concentrated on reasons for the developments. (d) was a common question with the Foundation Tier and surprisingly the answers on the Higher Tier were not as good as those on the Foundation Tier. On this paper, a significant minority failed to bring out the effect of the solution on the traffic problems of Edinburgh. (e) was the most poorly answered question overall on the paper. Most candidates named a town (probably their own town) but answered in generalities such as 'industries have grown up', 'jobs have been created' with no specific examples. Many described 'good shopping', 'entertainment' and 're-furnished houses'. Most descriptions could have been anywhere in the UK. Spatial growth was the most commonly attempted but it was often very difficult to determine what was urban renewal and what was growth. Quite large numbers simply wrote the name of a town followed by anything they knew about it. The mark scheme allowed candidates to consider this question in terms of historical reasons for growth or modern growth associated with urban sprawl. The specification appears clear. It is the historical growth of a named urban area that should be studied.

Question 7

A large majority scored full marks on (a). Those that did not tended to confuse run-off and groundwater. In (b) most knew what an ox-bow lake was and had a fair if not complete idea of the sequence involved in their formation. At times jargon sometimes overtook simple straightforward

description. Hence, much consideration of the increasing amplitude of the meander and wavelength meant there was little space for the progression to the lake. Candidates and centres need to realise that to reach Level 3 in these type of questions there needs to be detailed knowledge and understanding of the processes involved. Candidates were probably hampered by a lack of space and the diagrams were often very small. Hydraulic erosion and flood control were both well answered. There were many generalised or incomplete answers to (d) with only a small minority reaching Level 3. Once again, despite the requirement in the specification for a detailed case study, candidates here had little specific place knowledge in their answers. The best answers were those who knew the London aquifer well. Here there were some excellent descriptions of the geology of the London Basin and the water table. However, even in these answers there were limited attempts to explain how this water is used to supply the urban areas. There was some use of Keilder as an example of water supplied from an upland reservoir, but once again detail was largely confined to the siting and storage of the water in upland Northumberland with little reference made of the transfer of water to the urban areas of Tyneside and areas further a field.

Paper 2 – Foundation Tier (3032/2F)

Most candidates seemed to find much that they could do on this paper; generally, questions were attempted although the quality of responses varied greatly.

The new format found favour with candidates. The new style question one produced many high scores, and question two, with the old 'favourites', the Mezzogiorno and Mediterranean Spain caused only minor problems. Question three was the downfall of many candidates, as the very word 'monsoon' seems to cause immense problems. Worryingly there was some evidence here that new additions to the syllabus were causing problems for candidates. Question four was generally well done with some common misconceptions.

Question 1

(a) was usually correct with most candidates identifying some of the main areas of study. In (b) many candidates believe the tunnel to run from Dover to Calais and only a few could identify the M20 – most candidates opting for their local motorway. London and France were usually correct. (c) was well done as was (d)(ii) in particular. Most could find three features of a squatter settlement (e)(i) but the word 'describe' confused some candidates – one word is not a description. (e)(ii) was usually Calcutta and the ways of improving conditions, (e)(iii) were well described. The majority completed the graph (f)(i) correctly but misread (ii) as reasons for a rapid rise in population.

Question 2

The concept of core (a) seems poorly understood and surprisingly, very few candidates could correctly identify the area of the Mezzogiorno (b). Traditional farming was related to the photo (c) and most candidates were able to score some marks here. In (d), the absentee landlord situation was poorly understood, many candidates feeling that they may fall out with each other, rather than the idea of absence and/or lack of interest. The Mafia figures highly here. In (e), most candidates relied on the sketch to the exclusion of any other knowledge but this was often sufficient, if correctly linked to explanation, to move answers up the levels of this question.

Mediterranean Spain is always seen as a favourite part of the syllabus so most candidates could name an important tourist area (f)(i) and almost all identified France in (f)(ii). As always, in (g)(i), examiners like to see seasons – it is not hot in Mediterranean Spain all year round, but reasons for attracting visitors (f)(ii) were plentiful, as were benefits (h)(i) – most concentrating on money and jobs. Surprisingly, the usually well covered problems (f)(iii) were not as strong as usual - candidates seemed to have foregone lager louts for litter – there are a wealth of problems to be utilised in any answer, but many candidates seem to prefer one.

Question 3

This was the downfall of many candidates. It began with the map (a) where incorrect interpretation of the key led to the belief that the dots represented the answers. The plot on the graph (b) was universally correct but then candidates could not describe the climate (b)(ii) failing to appreciate the constant hot temperatures and the pronounced wet seasons. (b)(iii) was the worst question on the paper for most candidates – perhaps this is seen as a more esoteric part of the syllabus or is felt to be too convoluted – either way answers were very poor, even given the prompt of the diagrams. Worryingly, the cause of tropical storms (c)(i) was also poor – a new addition to the syllabus but most candidates attempted an erratic description of the diagram, without any real sequentiality. In (c)(ii) the key is 'why do they die' and that is what examiners wish to know. In (d)(i), hardly any candidates could identify planting, most went for harvesting – plainly not so in this photograph. There were some pleasing answers to (d)(ii) and in (e) many reasons were given for the high birth rate although the simple statement – 'no contraception' was not given much credence by examiners. Many candidates misinterpreted falling death rates as high death rates.

Question 4

The two types of aid (a)(i) were either known or not, but most candidates who did not know were prepared to guess. The large amount of short-term aid was linked to the disaster (a)(ii) but the links between aid received and interest paid on debt eluded most candidates in (b). In (c), candidates either knew a development project or they did not and those that had learnt one were able to score highly. Those who fell back on flood protection schemes in the Ganges Delta or the Green Revolution also scored highly. Those candidates who referred to the work of the Cassa could gain no credit.

TNC's (d)(i) were not well known, similarly with the benefits to other countries (d)(ii). The graph (e)(i) was well plotted and in (e)(ii) the causes of the greenhouse effect were reasonably well understood. In (f)(i), flooding was identified but some candidates wrote that Ipswich had disappeared. The effects of global warming (f)(iii) were known but some candidates show confusion between global warming and the greenhouse effect.

To conclude, the paper appears to have been accessible for candidates and the new format has found favour. Some of the new parts of the specification appear to have been less well learnt, but as always the candidates who wrote linked statements when explanation was required, tended to score highly.

Paper 2 – Higher Tier (3032/2H)

Most candidates seemed to find much that they could do on this paper; generally, questions were attempted, there was no evidence of any part of the paper proving impossible for candidates, on the contrary, examiners were impressed by the quality of geographical knowledge expressed by the candidates.

The new format found favour with candidates. The new style question one produced many high scores, and question two, with the old 'favourites', the Mezzogiorno and Mediterranean Spain caused only minor problems. Question three was the downfall of many candidates, as the very word 'monsoon' seems to cause immense problems. Worryingly, there was some evidence here that new additions to the syllabus were causing problems for candidates. Question four was generally well done with some common misconceptions.

Question 1

(a) was usually correct with most candidates identifying some of the main areas of study. In (b) many candidates believe the tunnel to run from Dover to Calais (b)(ii) and only a few could locate the M20. (c) was well done as was (d), part (ii) in particular. Most could find three features of a squatter settlement (e)(i). (e)(ii) was usually Calcutta and the ways of improving conditions (e)(iii) were well described. The majority read the graph (f)(i) correctly and could describe a problem caused by the rise in population (f)(iii). Overall, this question scored highly, the new format finding favour with candidates.

Question 2

The relationship shown by the scattergraph (a) was universally understood but surprisingly, very few candidates could correctly identify the area of the Mezzogiorno (b)(i). Traditional farming was related to the photo (b)(ii) and well described. In (c), most candidates relied on the sketch to the exclusion of any other knowledge but this was often sufficient, if correctly linked to explanation, to move answers up the levels of this question.

Mediterranean Spain is always seen as a favourite part of the syllabus so most candidates could name an important tourist area (d)(ii) and almost all identified France. As always, in (e)(i) examiners like to see seasons – it is not hot in Mediterranean Spain all year round. Reasons for attracting visitors (e)(ii) were plentiful, but surprisingly the usually well covered problems (e)(iii) were not as strong as usual - candidates seemed to have foregone lager louts for litter – there are a wealth of problems to be utilised in any answer, but many candidates seem to prefer one.

Question 3

This was the downfall of many candidates. The temperature range on the graph was universally correct (a)(i), but then candidates could not describe the climate (a)(ii), failing to appreciate the constant hot temperatures and the pronounced wet season. (a)(iii) was the worst question on the paper for most candidates – perhaps this is seen as a more esoteric part of the syllabus or is felt to be too convoluted – either way, answers were very poor, even given the prompt of the diagrams. Worryingly, the cause of tropical storms (b)(ii) was also poor – a new addition to the syllabus but most candidates attempted an erratic description of the diagram, without any real sequentiality. In (b)(iii) the key is 'why do they die' and that is what examiners wish to know. In (c)(i) hardly any candidates could identify planting, most went for harvesting – plainly not so in this photograph. There were some pleasing answers to (c)(ii) and in (d) many reasons were given for the high birth rate although the simple statement – 'no contraception' was not given much credence by examiners.

Question 4

The two types of aid (a)(i) were either known or not, but most candidates who did not know were prepared to guess. The large amount of short-term aid was linked to the disaster (a)(ii). In (c) candidates either knew a development project or they did not and those that had learnt one were able to score highly. Those who fell back on flood protection schemes in the Ganges Delta or the Green Revolution also scored highly. Those candidates who referred to the work of the Cassa could gain no credit.

TNC's (d)(i) were generally well known, similarly with the benefits to other countries although many candidates believe the Japanese to be magnanimous rather than profit orientated. The graph (e) was well plotted and in (f)(ii) the causes of the greenhouse effect were well understood. In (g) a range of solutions were suggested.

To conclude, the paper appears to have been accessible for candidates and the new format has found favour. Some of the new parts of the specification appear to have been less well learnt, and other parts are seen as more esoteric or complex but as always the candidates who wrote linked statements, when explanation was required, tended to score highly.

Geography B – Short Course

Centre-Assessed Coursework (3037/C)

General Comments

In this first year of the new Specification, it was pleasing to see how well many centres coped with the new marking criteria. Moderators were impressed with the variety of coursework produced and the breadth of knowledge displayed by many of the candidates. There were a number of outstanding enquiries in evidence. It is appreciated that the logistics behind organising fieldwork visits are becoming more complex: staffing, cover, finance, safety, transport are all difficult and time-consuming issues for a Head of Department. This, added to the fact that Geography teachers are at the mercy of the British climate, makes it remarkable that departments produced such an impressive range of quality work.

Teacher-led enquiries were by far the most common format. 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 easy opportunities for them to re-visit the sites. As expected, a 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 identified. Furthermore, these tend 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.

It is encouraging to report that a large number of centres obviously made use of the Coursework Advisers or attended AQA training sessions and/or Standardisation meetings. The quality of enquiries produced and the detailed annotation that accompanied some of this work suggests that the advice they received and the materials they were given were put to great effect in creating new coursework topics or adapting existing coursework to the new guidelines.

Administration

There is no doubt that this year there were problems regarding administration that were in some cases beyond the control of the centres. The fact that this was the first year of a new Specification; the late allocation of moderators to some centres and the supply of the correct documentation; the completion of new proforma sheets and new sampling procedures, for some, all combined to make it a difficult start for some centres and, indeed, some moderators. The whole process was further complicated and prolonged by the very late arrival of scripts from some centres.

On a more positive note, AQA moderators were a little less frustrated than in previous years in that centres knew exactly the specific sample to send. The new sampling procedure worked well and made sure that the number and composition of the sample sent from the centre was correct in the majority of cases.

The detailed attention needed to efficiently negotiate the administrative process cannot be overstated. Whilst some centres were quite superb in all aspects of administration and justifiably deserve credit, others failed to meet even the basic requirements and thus delayed the whole moderation process.

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 EDI 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 printouts) 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. In one or two cases, centres were using out of date proformas and, as a result, did not provide all the information required. **The Centre Declaration Sheet should also accompany the sample.**

- Some coursework is being 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 the Board's 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 breaks in the post it would be appreciated. Equally, **there is no need to send the work 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 the 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.

- A number of candidates were given zero marks for their 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 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 relate 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. But, a minority of centres provided only limited evidence that internal assessment had taken place. Examples of poor practice included: just marks on the CRF; a number of ticks in the body of the work or a few unhelpful comments scattered throughout the work that bore no relation to the content or the mark scheme. These centres need to be reminded **that annotation is a requirement of the GCSE Mandatory Code of Practice.** Centres will hopefully realise that far from being an unnecessary chore, annotation helps their candidates by focusing their marking and making it more likely that moderation will confirm the centre's marks.

- 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 has not been given priority and moderators are spending more time dealing with the problems associated with administration than they are on assessing the quality of the Geography. It is also important that **the internal standardisation process carried out by the centre is rigorous.** If there are problems with the marking, it is sometimes the result of one teacher's marking not being in line with the rest of the department.

Marking Criteria

Many centres successfully applied the new 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 the majority of 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 suggest that candidates include, within their introductions, a glossary of terms. This is a useful idea but it must be remembered that 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 understanding 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 lacked the normal conventions. Understanding was delivered through background information, scene setting or a series of chapters headed 'theory'. In each case, the theoretical basis of the work was compartmentalised 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 a range of 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 the justification of this unique element 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 extensions 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, preferring to spend most of their time discussing the advantages and disadvantages of each technique or the merits of different sampling procedures.

The following would all prohibit progression into the Higher Level, even if the candidate had produced an individual piece of work:

- 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.

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 should be actually used in the investigation to collect primary or secondary data, unless there is a very good reason why that particular method did not prove possible. If that is the case, mention of it could be made in the evaluation sections. Centres were awarding 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.

Data Presentation

Centres are to be congratulated on 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 a wide range of appropriate 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 continuum which takes account of the accuracy, appropriateness, range and complexity of the types of presentation being used. 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 did not seem 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 Excel produced 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 with 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. Centres and candidates should ensure, at the planning stage, that the data produced is suitable for being represented by higher order skills.

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 highlighting patterns or anomalies. They then went on to provide explanations, demonstrate links between the data sets, and draw valid conclusions that related to the original hypothesis.

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.

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.

Teacher comments and annotation within the body of the work would suggest 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 is 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, might be a reflection of the particular location and time when the enquiry was undertaken and so cannot be considered applicable in the wider context.

Evaluation presented a problem for some centres with candidates having a tendency to write in congratulatory terms rather than highlighting limitations. Any evaluation statements tended to be vague and generic rather than detailed and specific to the enquiry. In the weaker enquiries, 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 important point to remember about this section is that it is not about making judgements regarding the quality of the Geography but is an opportunity to provide a critical appraisal of the effectiveness of the enquiry process.

Summary

The annual report, by design, records this year's findings and gives guidance as to how to avoid future pitfalls. It would be an injustice to view the document as purely negative comment. Public recognition should go to all fellow hardworking committed Geography teachers who have tackled the new Specification with professionalism. In the majority of cases, coursework enquiries were worthy of great merit, testament to the youngsters' hard work and the teachers who guide them.

Foundation Tier (3037/F)

General Comments

The majority of candidates, if they had the appropriate knowledge and understanding, appeared to be able to complete the paper in the time specified. There were a very large number of low scoring candidates who left large parts of the paper unanswered.

Question 1

Most candidates got at least one of these answers correct. This question was set in an attempt to give wider specification coverage than was possible with the longer questions in view of the limited amount of time and marks available.

Question 2

The answers to this question on the M4 corridor were either very poorly answered or the candidate gained full marks. The alphabetical nature of the answer may have helped some candidates but it gave less chance of error in the marking.

Question 3

Candidates could largely cope with basic map reading skills. It was pleasing to see that the majority of candidates who answered this question gave the correct answer to (a)(iv) showing an appreciation of urban morphology. Too many candidates merely repeated the figures in Figure 3 when answering (b)(i). They had to use the figures, albeit in a very simple way to gain credit. Weaker candidates just gave the opposite in (ii) very few candidates reached Level 2 in this part of the question. There were some good answers to (c). The answers reflected both the unattractiveness of the inner city as well as the advantages of living on the rural-urban fringe.

Question4

(a) and (b) were well answered although some candidates failed to give a country in (a). (c) was poorly answered despite the fact that the answer could be taken directly off Figure 5.

Question 5

A variety of answers were seen in (a). Madrid was a common answer and there is some confusion between the Balearics and the Canaries. Candidates could generally interpret the graph but they must realise that they needed to relate their answers to why the climatic features listed were attractive to visitors from Northern Europe.

Question 6

This was very poorly answered. Virtually no candidates gained much credit in this question. This question was taken directly from the specification using the same wording, yet, in spite of this, candidates did not have the detailed knowledge and did not understand what was meant by growth. There was equally poor knowledge of a planning issue in the specified conurbations. The Teacher's Guide gives very specific advice on this part of the specification and centres should be encouraged to make full use of this document in their teaching.

Question 7

This was very poorly answered. Only Tokyo was really known.

Question 8

This proved very demanding for the candidates. It was not clear whether they were not familiar with the reasons for the population distribution of Japan or that they did not read the question carefully enough. Most candidates ignored distribution of population altogether and just tried to write about relief and Japan's need to trade. It perhaps would have been beneficial to the candidates if relief had been defined as the shape of the land because this word did not seem familiar to them

Question 9

This was generally one of the better-answered questions. Most candidates who answered this question scored reasonably well although most failed to go beyond the use of Figure 10B in answering (b)(iii) and so remained in Level 1.

Question 10

The greenhouse effect is not well understood by candidates at this level. There is confusion with global warning and the feeling that the ozone layer comes into the story somewhere. The analysis of the graph was good and most had some idea of the unsustainability of the continued use of fossil fuels.

Question 11

This was very poorly answered. Candidates did not seem to have an idea of the relationship of short-term aid to natural disasters. The answer on long-term aid was often merely a repetition of Figure 12 with limited comment.

Question 12

The specification is very clear in the requirement for the candidates to have studied a named development project in a LEDC. The answers here were very weak with very few gaining any credit.

Higher Tier (3037/H)

General Comments

With an entry of less than 50 candidates this report can be of only limited nature. These candidates had no problem in completing the paper in the specified time.

Question 1

This was generally done well. This question was set with the intention of giving wider specification coverage than was otherwise possible in a 75 minutes paper and with only 70 marks available. The weakest answer seemed to be the one on glacial processes.

Question 2

For a place specific paper, the candidate's locational knowledge of the specified regions was not good. The majority of candidates concentrated on the transport links in the M4 corridor, even arguing for the importance of a port on the Bristol Channel as being a locational factor in the siting of the High-Tech industry. The command word 'annotate' was not understood by some candidates. Some ignored the map and just wrote in the spaces either above or below the map, while others merely labelled the map. Good candidates were able to recognise the importance of the universities at Oxford, Reading or Bristol for research and development as well as providing potential skilled employees. The closeness of attractive and pollution free areas such as the Cotswolds was less well understood. No candidate appreciated the importance of the atomic energy establishment at Harwell Transport along the motorway and the nearness to Heathrow were commonly seen as important but there was too much emphasis on the transport of raw materials which is of minor significance in these types of industrial location.

Question 3

Candidates coped with the map reading skills of grid references and symbols and were able to appreciate the differences in the layout of the streets in the two grid squares. There was still a tendency for some candidates to ignore the command word of 'describe' in (a)(iii) and to explain the difference in the street pattern in terms of the different urban morphological zones. Inner city decline was largely seen in terms of the attractiveness of the suburban areas rather than the issues associated with the areas of the inner city like Central Leith. Some candidates confused the inner city with the CBD. The final part of this question was the most poorly answered. Here again there was reluctance on the part of the candidates to describe, many concentrating on explaining the growth of dormitory settlements by explanations of the growth of commuting. Descriptions, where present, were frequently nothing more than a list of developments on the rural-urban fringe such as out-of-town shopping centres, industrial estates, and golf courses. The lack of detail meant that the answers remained in Level 1.

Question 4

A surprisingly large number of candidates could not define GNP accurately. The characteristics of a core region were generally known even if at times they were not well expressed. The naming of a peripheral area proved much more problematic even though they could have taken the information directly off the Figure 3. A country was credited as well as specific areas within the EU. A common answer was England or the UK – perhaps we are peripheral to Europe despite the politicians!

Question 5

Still a tendency for candidates to rely on vague generalisations rather than detailed analysis of the graph and some failed to relate the aspects of the climate described to the growth of tourism in the Balearic Islands.

Question 6

This was the weakest question on the paper by far. Drawing sketch maps is obviously a skill that is given a low priority in centres. This is disappointing especially in view of the regional nature of this specification. The wording of the specification is such that centres should recognise that any question on the European Core will have to be sufficiently broad as to be able to be able to apply to any of the four listed. The lists of details are taken directly from the Teacher's Guide where it is suggested that the candidates should be taught to produce a sketch map of the site and situation of their chosen conurbation. The maps seen were of very poor quality. They largely consisted of the detail listed drawn in no obvious relationship to the actual place. Basic ignorance was shown. For example, where Paris was chosen it would be expected that candidates would know that the River Seine runs through the heart of the city. This was not in evidence in the maps seen. The dot for Paris was far removed from the line representing the River Seine. This lack of knowledge was equally reflected in (b). The examiner interpreted the idea of growth, both in terms of the historical reasons for the growth of the population and also modern growth as shown by expansion of the built-up area.

Question 7

This was well answered with most candidates being able to name the places on the map of Japan.

Question 8

Candidates could explain the distribution of population in Japan. The impression was that they were well prepared for this answer and produced a stock answer. It would have been nice to see greater analysis of Figure 7 in answering this question.

Question 9

The advantages of the Tropical Monsoon climate for rice cultivation was largely expressed in terms of it being 'hot' and 'wet'. Candidates need to show appreciation of detailed knowledge here as represented by reference to precise statistics. There were some good answers on the Green Revolution but some tended to rely too heavily on Figure 8 and so were restricted to Level 1. Detailed explanation was required to reach Level 3.

Question 10

This was generally well answered and it was pleasing to note that the confusion between the greenhouse effect and global warming was less in evidence. Sustainability is still a difficult concept for GCSE candidates and only the best candidates were able to gain full credit in (c).

Question 11

Greater care was needed in extracting information from the newspaper extract. Many candidates giving an answer of 0.3% for (a)(ii). The answer on the development project was very much centre specific. If the candidates had studied a particular example as required by the specification, and were able to give a precise location or name at the start of their answer, then they were well on the way to gaining maximum credit. On the other hand, a lack of any precise place knowledge meant that the candidates were struggling and often remained in basic Level 1.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Full Course

Foundation tier

Component	Maximum Mark (Raw)	Maximum Mark (Scaled)	Mean Mark (Scaled)	Standard Deviation (Scaled)
3032C	30	75	30.4	13.7
3032/1F	75	90	46.7	12.3
3032/2F	120	135	54.6	19.3
Foundation tier overall 3032F	--	300	131.7	38.3

		Max. mark	C	D	E	F	G
3032/C boundary mark	Raw	30	15	12	9	6	3
	scaled	75	38	30	23	15	8
3032/1F boundary mark	raw	75	50	43	37	31	25
	scaled	90	60	52	44	37	30
3032/2F boundary mark	raw	120	64	54	44	34	24
	scaled	135	72	61	50	38	27
Foundation tier scaled boundary mark		300	164	139	114	90	66

Higher tier

Component	Maximum Mark (Raw)	Maximum Mark (Scaled)	Mean Mark (Scaled)	Standard Deviation (Scaled)
3032C	30	75	53.9	13.4
3032/1H	75	90	52.4	11.3
3032/2H	120	135	85.3	17.8
Higher tier overall 3032H	--	300	191.5	36.5

		Max. mark	A*	A	B	C	D	allowed E
3032/C boundary mark	raw	30	27	23	19	15	12	-
	scaled	75	68	58	48	38	30	-
3032/1H boundary mark	raw	75	54	49	44	40	34	-
	scaled	90	65	59	53	48	41	-
3032/2H boundary mark	raw	120	100	89	78	68	62	-
	scaled	135	113	100	88	77	70	-
Higher tier scaled boundary mark		300	237	212	187	162	141	130

Provisional statistics for the award

Foundation tier (5584 candidates)

	C	D	E	F	G
Cumulative %	21.6	43.6	64.8	81.3	92.3

Higher tier (5294 candidates)

	A*	A	B	C	D	allowed E
Cumulative %	11.8	30.6	55.3	79.3	91.5	95.1

Overall (10878 candidates)

	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Cumulative %	5.7	14.9	26.9	49.7	66.9	79.5	88.0	93.7

Short Course

Foundation tier

Component	Maximum Mark (Raw)	Maximum Mark (Scaled)	Mean Mark (Scaled)	Standard Deviation (Scaled)
3037/C	30	30	10.4	5.4
3037/F	70	90	30.9	12.8
Foundation tier overall 3037F	--	120	41.2	14.8

		Max. mark	C	D	E	F	G
3037/C boundary mark	raw	30	15	12	9	7	5
	scaled	30	15	12	9	7	5
3037/F boundary mark	raw	70	42	37	32	27	22
	scaled	90	54	48	41	35	28
Foundation tier scaled boundary mark		120	65	57	49	41	33

Higher tier

Component	Maximum Mark (Raw)	Maximum Mark (Scaled)	Mean Mark (Scaled)	Standard Deviation (Scaled)
3037/C	30	30	16.7	4.6
3037/H	70	90	47.7	12.7
Higher tier overall 3037H	--	120	64.3	16.1

		Max. mark	A*	A	B	C	D	allowed E
3037/C boundary mark	raw	30	27	23	19	15	12	-
	scaled	30	27	23	19	15	12	-
3037/H boundary mark	raw	70	53	47	41	36	25	-
	scaled	90	68	60	53	46	32	-
Higher tier scaled boundary mark		120	91	81	71	61	44	35

Provisional statistics for the award

Foundation tier (179 candidates)

	C	D	E	F	G
Cumulative %	6.1	12.3	20.1	34.6	53.1

Higher tier (37 candidates)

	A*	A	B	C	D	allowed E
Cumulative %	5.4	16.2	32.4	62.2	86.5	94.6

Overall (216 candidates)

	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Cumulative %	0.9	2.8	5.6	15.7	25.0	32.9	44.9	60.2

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).