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General Certificate of Secondary Education

Geography 3037 Short Course

Specification B

3037/H Higher Tier

Report on the Examination

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3037/F – Higher Tier

With such a small entry to this year's paper it was difficult to make meaningful comments on the responses made by the candidates. The main criticism of these candidates was a failure to read the question, particularly in 1(d), 3(a)(i) and to a lesser extent 2(c). The weakest section was Section C, The Wider World and the tropical monsoon climate in particular.

Question 1

The majority of candidates were able to recognise the corrie on Figure 1. Whether this meant that they did not appreciate that 1(a)(ii) dealt with a ribbon lake rather than a corrie was not clear. This question was not answered well, many failing even to relate its formation to glacial action. Those who did have some idea on its formation did not get beyond Level 2. There was passing reference to the erosion processes of plucking and abrasion which were a requirement of Level 2, but no candidates gave the necessary detail required of these processes to merit Level 3. The advantages of wind turbines were generally well known and the majority could recognise the figures which frequently characterised inner city areas. Part (d) was very poorly answered, demonstrating an inability to describe the main landscape features from an OS map extract. The candidates were too concerned with the human features of the Thames valley whereas the question clearly required a description of the river itself. The only real information apparent in the answers was an occasional reference to meanders and tributaries, but these were frequently referred to as distributaries. The question on commuting was generally well answered.

Question 2

The core and periphery were generally understood, although there was a tendency to give straight opposites as the differences between these two areas of the EU. Candidates must realise that where a contrast is asked for and there are two marks available, then straight opposites can only gain one mark. The boundary between the two areas was done well if the candidates recognised that the information on Figure 3 gave them a very good idea as to where to draw the line. Benidorm was frequently the correct response given to part (b)(i). It was pleasing to see the use of climate statistics for the question on the climate of Mediterranean Spain, although the average temperature of 30°C for summers in Spain is a little high. There was less appreciation of the importance of the precipitation regime in promoting tourism. Package holidays and cheap transport were the most common choices in (b)(iii) and this question was generally well answered. The candidates had good knowledge of Rotterdam – Europoort in part (c) but they had obviously learnt the information as a model answer, since they all answered the question as to why Rotterdam-Europoort developed as a port rather than as an industrial centre. They needed to make some references to the port industries, which have developed in the city because of its site and trade.

Question 3

As has been mentioned this was the weakest section. Part (a)(i) was particularly badly answered in that candidates largely ignored the photograph and reproduced what they had learnt about the features of rice farming in general. There was less evidence of the use of climatic statistics in the question in the tropical monsoon climate compared to that on the Mediterranean. They were aware of the existence of the three seasons in the Ganges delta and often used these rather than figures to relate to the different farming activities. The needs of the rice plants and the extent to which they are satisfied by the tropical monsoon climate were less well done. Despite the prompts given in part (b) to help the candidates explain the mechanics of the tropical monsoon, this question was very badly answered. Frequently the candidates merely wrote out the five prompts and added either nothing else, or answers that were confused or totally incorrect. There was great confusion between air pressure and winds and it was frequently inferred that the air pressure moved over this part of the Indian subcontinent. The

majority of candidates recognised the difference in the relief between the interior and coastal areas of Japan and a few were able to go further and give some information about the relief of the different islands.

Question 4
Most of this section was generally well answered. The main area of weakness was the confusion between aid and loans. There is still the widespread misconception that aid has to be paid back with interest causing debt. There was good detail on the building of the dykes in Vietnam and it was pleasing that many candidates recognised the sustainability of this particular development project. The effect of the burning of fossil fuels and deforestation on the development of global warming was well answered.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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