



General Certificate of Secondary Education

Geography 3037 Short Course *Specification B*

Higher Tier

Report on the Examination

2008 examination - June series

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3037 Higher Tier

As in previous years the very small entry for this examination makes any attempt to generalise very difficult. There were some encouraging signs in that the answers from this year's cohort were much stronger in their place knowledge than those from previous years. As this specification's characteristic ethos is the emphasis on place, this is a pleasing trend. While this specification will not continue beyond 2010, the study of place is important in the new revised specifications and it is hoped that centres will recognise the importance of using detailed case studies to support geographical concepts and ideas.

Question 1

This specification is unique among those provided by AQA, in that it provides a list of geographical terms which '*must be known and understood by candidates*' (page 76 of the specification booklet). It was disappointing therefore that the candidates are confusing 'urbanisation' and 'urban growth'. Part 1(b)(i) was the most poorly answered question on the paper. Blackburn was the most commonly chosen example. The mark scheme allowed credit for either historical or modern growth. Candidates who wrote from the historical perspective tended to score more highly than those concentrating on modern growth. These candidates were able to show the impact of the textile trade on Blackburn's growth and hence included some place specific details. The candidates who attempted to describe the town's modern growth frequently could go no further than vague generalisations about industrial growth and the resultant rise in population. Some candidates misinterpreted this question and wrote about redevelopment and renovation. Centres should realise that this topic requires detailed knowledge of locations in the chosen area. It is often more successful if a smaller urban area is chosen, provided it has some distinctive urban morphological zones.

Map reading and interpretation was generally sound and it was pleasing that most candidates were able to recognise glacial features from their contour patterns. The formation of the glacial trough did not cause any problems but many candidates failed to reach Level 3 because their answers lacked detailed knowledge of the erosion processes involved.

Question 2

The characteristics of the EU's periphery were well known. In part 2(b)(i) there were some candidates who used the photograph effectively and others who wrote good accounts of the problems of Mediterranean Spain before the development of tourism from their own background knowledge, but relatively few did both as required by the question. There were some good answers on the benefits of tourism, but it would have been nice to see some case study exemplification in this question in order to give the depth of detail necessary for credit at the highest level. Paris and Rotterdam-Europoort were the chosen examples in the last section of the question and in both cases some good regional knowledge was shown.

Question 3

It was a pleasure to see some good understanding of the mechanics of the tropical monsoon climate. There is still a tendency among the less able candidates however to confuse pressure and wind. There was equally good knowledge and understanding shown about the Green Revolution. Japanese place names were in evidence in the answers to 3(c) allowing candidates to be considered for credit at Level 3. Some candidates went beyond the wording of the question by considering human factors rather than restricting their answers to the influence of physical factors on the distribution of population.

Question 4

While there were some candidates whose description in part 4(a)(i) was a listing of individual points off the graph, it was pleasing to see some attempts to classify and the ability to take an overview. Centres should recognise that the use of general, specific, and exception is often a very good way for candidates to describe a pattern or trend.

The impact on sea levels as the result of global warming was well understood, but some candidates who did not give a named example, tended to write in a very generalised manner and hence were restricted to Level 1. Most candidates recognised that the final answer related to long-term aid but then failed to relate this to sustainability and the possible benefits for future generations.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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