GCSE 2003
June Series

ASSESSMENT and
QUALIFICATIONS
ALLIANCE

Report on the Examination

Geography
Specification C

■ GCSE 3033

■ GCSE 3038 (Short Course)

CONTENTS

Specification C 3033 (Foundation Tier)

Units 3033/1F, 3033/2F

Specification C 3033 (Higher Tier)

Units 3033/1H, 3033/2H and Coursework

Specification C 3038 (Short Course)

Units 3038/F, 3038/H and Coursework

Specification C

Foundation Tier

Paper 1 – 3033/1F

General Points

- Initial comments from centres indicated that candidates had found the papers a challenging but fair test that was closely related to the specification.

- Most candidates attempted every part of each question; there were few gaps and time did not appear to be an issue.

- Where questions were not attempted, they were usually skill-based questions; especially the use of the Ordnance Survey map at the Foundation Level.

- The transition from the previous (SEG B) style paper appears to have been quite smooth with many centres making positive observations about continuity.

- There is no doubt that the papers do present a slightly different challenge, particularly in terms of knowledge and application of understanding.

Focus for Development

The papers have a specific mark allocation for knowledge and applied understanding and it is worth thinking about how this might be reflected in the chosen topic. In order to prepare candidates effectively, the following three areas may be worth considering.

1. Build up a revision worksheet on the topic that identifies the key words and offers definitions. Also include observations about the issues associated with the topic and remind candidates about comparative examples used during the course.

2. Issues based examination papers are always about identifying issues and conflicts and identifying management strategies. A philosophical element of the specification is an understanding that management strategies can have positive and negative impacts. This is a point worth emphasising, especially at the Higher Tier level.

3. There are a large number of marks linked to the application of skills and use of resources. Practise by using a range of resources throughout the course and ensure that candidates have a clear understanding of the type of skills required.

This is a different style of assessment and can come as a shock to candidates if they have not practised it. The use of a whole paper as part of a 'mock' exam may be helpful or using parts of questions in a classwork or homework situation is a good way to develop confidence. The key is to ensure that good practice is built up throughout the course so that candidates feel comfortable and confident in the final examination.

In particular, the following points need to be stressed:

- Ensure that candidates are well equipped. A pencil, ruler and a few coloured pencils would be useful for this type of paper.

- Stress the need for accuracy in the skills based questions. The questions are not always very difficult and so will demand a high level of accuracy.

- Check answers carefully, particularly the skills based questions. A number of small errors can add up to a loss of many marks.

- Use past papers to enable candidates to appreciate the style and concept of the paper.

- Practise by using a range of resources and getting students to identify the key points on them.

- Encourage students to mark up the key points in the resources (highlight/underline) in order to identify the relevant factors in relation to the questions.

- Stress the need to relate length and depth of response to the mark/space allocation.

- Encourage candidates to appreciate the developmental nature of levels marking, i.e. show them what a Level 1 response looks like and what it would take to make it a Level 2.

- Make candidates aware of the distinction between copying the resource and actually using it to help them answer a question.

Issues based questions are often about economic/environmental conflicts. Ensure that candidates have an awareness of this and understand the appropriate terminology.

Decision-Making Exercise (DME)

Question 1

In part (a) most candidates had a reasonable idea of the 'rural-urban fringe', although it was clear that a small number had not looked at the resource very carefully. This question presented no real problems and was answered very effectively.

Part (b)(i) and (ii) presented few problems and most candidates achieved high marks. The general level of accuracy on the graph was good. Responses to this question were variable with some excellent points being made about land-use change and environmental pressures. The best responses identified key ideas (land-use change, pollution, etc) and then developed the idea to explain how it puts the environment under pressure. A good example used by a number of candidates was that of development leading to habitat loss and the subsequent impact on plant and animal life.

In part (iii) a number of candidates repeated 'housing' as an answer – clearly not reading the question carefully. The resource was used effectively to identify other types of land use.

Question 2

Use of map in parts (a) and (b) was variable; often linked to the level of understanding in relation to ideas about 'the central business district' and 'the rural-urban fringe'. Those candidates who clearly understood the terminology did the questions well.

Part (c)(i) presented no real problems. There were a large number of appropriate responses.

In part (ii) there were a number of excellent responses, which considered a range of social and environmental factors; some expressed very effectively. A significant number of candidates identified 'character changes' in relation to village growth. A smaller number appeared to think that every village is populated by old people!

Question 3

Part (a) presented no real problems.

Most candidates in part (a) used the resource effectively to illustrate why industrial buildings may have become redundant, largely considering changes to industrial location or sub-urbanisation.

There were an excellent number of responses in part (a), with many candidates scoring full marks.

Responses to part (b) were variable with some candidates doing little more than repeating the question to very complex answers. At the highest level, candidates identified the problems of urban living and compared this with the advantages of living in 'new towns in the countryside'. Some of these comparative responses were very impressive.

Question 4

Parts a) and (b) concentrated on map reading skills and responses were variable. A small number of candidates failed to answer any of the questions and a number made many mistakes. Those that were able to use the Ordnance Survey map effectively often scored very well – with a number achieving all of the marks.

Part (b) was generally completed well with a large proportion of candidates achieving at the Higher Level. The majority of candidates identified transport links and the built environment as key comparative factors. A small proportion brought in elements of the physical geography.

Question 5

It was evident that most candidates in part (a) had used the resources well to develop their ideas. Very few scored very low marks – the majority achieving in the Higher Level. The best responses selected key points from the resource and developed them (rather than simply copying them). A number of candidates reflected back through the paper and picked up a range of ideas to develop their justification. Often this approach was very impressive.

There was a slight misunderstanding in part (b) with a small number of candidates simply describing disadvantages. Those that did reflect on the specific disadvantages and addressed the comments generally did well. There were many excellent points about environmental management, communication management and implementing transport schemes such as 'park and ride'.

Paper 2 – 3033/2F

General

The paper proved to be an effective discriminator of geographical ability. It was accessible to candidates of all abilities at this tier and allowed them to demonstrate positive achievement. The majority of candidates gave sound responses to data. Geographical skills such as interpreting population pyramids, graphs and pie charts were good, however use of map keys was more problematic for some candidates. Opportunities for extended writing were given in one or more parts of each question, and even the least able candidates were able to offer a response, which demonstrated some geographical understanding. The more able of the candidates were able to offer more developed responses, demonstrating good understanding of geographical issues, backed up with some correct use of geographical vocabulary and some case study examples.

The vast majority of candidates completed the paper and there were relatively few parts of the questions that were not attempted. This was encouraging. It was noticeable at this tier, that some candidates re-wrote the question as an introduction to their answer. This is not necessary, it uses up writing space and as a result the answer ends before the maximum mark is reached.

Question 2 was generally the best-answered, apart from part (e)(ii). Physical processes proved to be problematic for many candidates.

Managing Change in the Human Environment

Question 1

Part (a) was correctly completed by a majority of candidates, with most being able to interpret the population pyramids.

In part (b), most candidates were able to offer problems associated with a high dependency ratio, albeit at a simplistic level.

Parts (c)(i) and (ii) were well answered, with most candidates able to interpret the graph. However, on part (ii) some candidates did refer to the total urban population, rather than the rate of change.

Part (d)(i) was generally well done by a majority of the candidates. In part (d)(ii), many candidates interpreted the question purely in terms of population control e.g. simple ideas on contraception, and found it difficult to achieve full marks. The better candidates were able to give clear details of schemes relating to rural development/enterprise and more commonly, shantytown improvements, such as self-help schemes. There was however confusion amongst some candidates as to what exactly self-help schemes were. Actual place references were rarely given, beyond naming an urban area.

In part (e), a significant number of candidates described changes to LEDC cities or changes at the rural/urban fringe. However, most candidates were able to describe changes/reasons and give some development of these. There was much greater use of case study examples with some good descriptions of actual regeneration schemes.

Managing the Physical Environment

Question 2

Parts (a)(i) and (ii) were correctly completed by a majority of the candidates.

In part (a)(iii), a small minority of the candidates explained a destructive plate margin, but most were able to explain a constructive plate margin, with many developing their answers well to reach the maximum mark.

Part (b)(i) did not prove problematic for a vast majority of the candidates, but in (b)(ii), a significant number of candidates described the pattern of shaking as opposed to earthquake damage. Part (b)(iii) was generally well done by a majority of the candidates. In part (b), there were many simplistic answers referring to "stronger" buildings, but many did develop beyond this to suggest actual schemes. There were many misconceptions about using the Richter scale to predict earthquakes and that current technology enables us to predict earthquakes well in advance.

In part (d), many responses were not specific to the effects of a storm. Often there were no references to the effects of strong wind and heavy rain. There was a proliferation of simple statements of damage, however the more able candidates at this tier, were able to detail, the short term and some long-term effects of tropical storms.

Part (e)(i) was generally well done by a majority of the candidates. In part (e)(ii), the term 'landform was widely misunderstood, with many candidates giving the name of a place. The better candidates were able to give more detailed answers, these tending to focus upon glaciation, headland erosion and formation of waterfalls. A large number of candidates often gave a correct sequence of events, but knowledge of physical processes was noticeably lacking. Part (e)(iii) was correctly completed by a majority of the candidates, but some ignored the instruction to tick two boxes.

In part (f) a majority of the candidates were able to develop their responses beyond the data, to gain maximum marks.

A significant number of candidates produced low-level responses in part (g). A majority of the candidates produced a list of impractical suggestions such as "banning people" or, "close the National Park." There were also many low-level responses such as, "put in litter bins", without any further development. The better candidates at this tier were able to develop their suggested scheme, but there were few case study examples.

Managing Economic Development

Question 3

Parts (a)(i) and (ii) were correctly completed by a majority of the candidates. Part (a)(iii) was generally well done by a majority of the candidates, but there were many vague responses, such as 'quality of life', 'employment' etc.

Part (b)(i) did not prove problematic for a vast majority of the candidates. In part (b)(ii), a large number of candidates misread the key, not noticing that the figures were in thousands'.

Part (c)(i) elicited a wide range of responses. There were many simplistic references to 'jobs' and 'money' without any further development, but the better candidates could develop beyond this, e.g. "the money brought in will help the country develop as people learn new skills and can get better paid jobs". Part (c)(ii) was generally well done by a majority of the candidates. There were clear references to economic and environmental issues. Relatively few however, were set in the context of a real place.

Part (d) (i) was generally well done by a majority of the candidates. In part (d)(ii), some candidates did mis-interpret the key.

Parts (e)(i) and (ii) were well answered, with most candidates able to interpret the graph.

In part (f), a significant number of candidates did not understand the difference between global warming and ozone depletion, often confusing the two. However, a majority of the candidates were able to offer simple explanation of the process, the better candidates developed their answers further. In part (f), there were some extreme responses and many simple statements of effect, such as "it will make sea levels rise". However, the better candidates did develop these statements further.

Higher Tier

Paper 1 – 3033/1H

Decision–Making Exercise (DME)

Question 1

In part (a) most candidates had a reasonable idea of the 'rural-urban fringe', although it was clear that a small number had not looked at the resource very carefully.

Part (b)(i) presented few problems, although a number of candidates failed to address the command and attempted to explain rather than 'described'.

Responses to part (ii) were varied with some excellent answers which identified key factors of demand and also considered the idea of individual demand being satisfied by developers. A small number of candidates failed to consider the idea of 'demand from developers' and simply made comparative points about the difficulty of building in brownfield areas.

Part (iii) demanded the use of examples and consequently responses were variable. There were three main avenues of approach to the question.

1. Candidates who used no exemplification and often made vague comments about pollution, etc.
2. Candidates who showed a good understanding of the idea of land-use change and habitat loss and added vague place names as examples.
3. Candidates who used well-located and detailed examples to develop the idea of environmental pressure.

These three approaches were reflected in the levels marking with the third approach achieving the highest marks.

Question 2

Part (a) presented few problems and many candidates made very effective use of the Ordnance Survey map. A small number failed to respond to the 'east of grid line 43'; this was largely self-penalising.

In part (b)(i) there was a wide range of appropriate responses to this question.

In part (ii) there were a range of interesting ideas and points to this question, which ranged from the basic and stereotypical idea of all villages being old and not liking change to a more complex debate. At the highest level, candidates identified both positive and negative aspects of village growth and adopted a very perceptive approach.

Question 3

Parts (a) and (b) presented few problems. Most candidates appreciated the planning restrictions of Green Belts and also had a good grasp of changing urban/industrial location.

There were some very good answers in part (b) and many candidates showed a good level of understanding. Most candidates tended to focus more on disadvantages and were slightly more tentative about advantages. At the highest level, candidates not only identified points, but also explained <u>why</u> they were advantages or disadvantages.

Question 4

In part (a) a surprising number of candidates failed to get the three skills questions correct and consequently lost what were quite easy marks.

Describing the route of the motorway presented few problems in part (b), although many did not use very geographical or map reading terminology. Suggesting reasons for the route was more challenging, with many simply considering the advantages of the current route and not fully considering the factors involved in its construction. Consequently, few candidates identified physical factors.

Responses to part (c) were variable. It was clear that a significant number of candidates did not appreciate what was meant by 'physical features', and consequently described a range of inappropriate human features. Those that did identify 'physical features' often simply mentioned 'rivers' or 'hills' with only tentative reference to the question.

At the highest level, candidates identified the slope and rivers and clearly linked this to the possibilities of flooding and subsequent difficulties for housing development.

Question 5

It was evident that most candidates in part (a) had used the resources effectively to develop their ideas. There were fairly equal numbers selecting each of the choices and in all cases, candidates quoted from Figure 5. Very few scored low marks – the majority reaching Levels 2 and 3, with some impressively thoughtful ideas.

The best responses selected key points from the resource and developed them (rather than simply copying them). A number of candidates reflected back through the paper and picked up a range of ideas to develop their justification. Often this approach was very impressive.

However, in part (b) there was a slight misunderstanding, with a small number of candidates simply describing disadvantages. Those that did reflect on the specific disadvantages and addressed the commands generally did well. There were many excellent points about environmental management, communication management and implementing transport schemes such as 'park and ride'.

Paper 2 – 3033/2H

General

The paper proved to be an effective discriminator of geographical ability. It was accessible to candidates of all abilities at this tier and allowed them to demonstrate positive achievement. The majority of candidates gave very good responses to data. Geographical skills such as interpreting population pyramids, graphs and pie charts were good, however use of map keys was more problematic for some candidates. Opportunities for extended writing were given in one or more parts of each question, and even the lesser ability candidates at this tier were able to offer a response, which demonstrated some good geographical understanding. The more able of the candidates were able to offer many high quality, developed responses, demonstrating excellent understanding of geographical issues, backed up with the correct use of complex geographical vocabulary and detailed case study examples.

The vast majority of candidates completed the paper and there were relatively few parts of the questions that were not attempted. This was encouraging. It was noticeable at this tier, that some candidates wrote a lengthy pre-amble as an introduction to their answer. This is not necessary, as it uses up examination time.

Question 2 was generally the best-answered, apart from part (e)(ii). Physical processes also prove to be problematic for many candidates at this tier.

Managing Change in the Human Environment

Question 1

Part (a)(i) was correctly completed by a majority of the candidates who attempted it. A significant number missed the question out, due to not reading the paper carefully. Part (a)(ii) did not prove problematic for a vast majority of the candidates, although some did give references to the total population.

Part (b) was well answered, with most candidates offering clear problems associated with a high dependency ratio.

Parts (c)(i) and (ii) were well answered, with most candidates able to interpret the graph. However, on part (ii) some candidates did refer to the total urban population, rather than the rate of change.

In part (d), many candidates interpreted the question purely in terms of population control, e.g. China's one-child policy, and found it difficult to achieve full marks. The better candidates were able to give precise details of schemes relating to rural development/enterprise and/or shantytown improvements, such as self-help schemes, with actual place references. Good case studies scored well. A minority of candidates chose to describe problems in MEDC cities. Particularly noticeable on this question, was that many candidates, described the problems of shantytowns in a long pre-amble, rather than going straight into the management of these issues.

In part (e), a significant number of candidates described changes to LEDC cities or inappropriately, gave accounts of population control measures. However, most candidates were able to describe changes/reasons and give some development of these. The better candidates did produce some excellent case study answers, giving fully developed, detailed descriptions of actual regeneration schemes. They also linked them to the causes of inner city decline and de-industrialisation, or the effects of counter-urbanisation on the CBD.

AQA

Managing the Physical Environment

Question 2

Part (a)(i) was correctly completed by a majority of the candidates. In part (a)(ii), a small minority of the candidates explained a destructive plate margin, but most were able to explain a constructive plate margin, with many developing their answers very well to reach the maximum mark.

In part (b), once again a significant number of candidates lost time by unnecessarily describing earthquake effects before going on to deal with ways in which they could be managed. There were many simplistic answers referring to "stronger" buildings, but many did develop beyond this to suggest actual schemes. There were many misconceptions about using the Richter scale to predict earthquakes and that current technology enables us to predict earthquakes well in advance, although some of the better candidates did qualify this by stating that research was taking place, which may enable some degree of prediction. The better candidates were also able to use case studies to good effect and provide some very detailed accounts of building design or codes. A small minority of candidates did describe management of volcanoes. There was also little evidence of recent case study examples.

Part (c) was generally well done by a majority of the candidates. Most were able to describe in detail, the short term and long term effects of tropical storms; the better candidates also gave case study examples. However, many responses were not specific to the effects of a storm, often there were no references to the effects of strong wind and heavy rain.

In part (d)(i), relatively few candidates made reference to over-use or constant pressure by walkers. In part (d)(ii), the term 'landform' was not fully understood, with many candidates giving the name of a place. The better candidates were able to give clear, detailed answers, these tending to focus upon glaciation, headland erosion and formation of waterfalls. A large number of candidates often gave a correct sequence of events, but knowledge of physical processes was lacking. A significant number of candidates gave incorrect responses, dealing with depositional features or weathering.

In part (e) a majority of the candidates were able to develop their responses beyond the data, to gain maximum marks.

In part (f), a significant number of candidates once again, stated the problems, before their description of the management of these problems. Many candidates produced a list of impractical suggestions such as "banning people" or, "close the National Park". There were also many low-level responses such as, "put in litter bins", without any further development. The better candidates were able to add detail to their suggested scheme and/or give case study examples.

Managing Economic Development

Question 3

Part (a)(i) did not prove problematic for a vast majority of the candidates. In part (a)(ii) a majority of the candidates were able to identify indicators. There were however a significant number of vague responses, such as 'quality of life', 'employment' etc. In part (a)(iii) a majority of the candidates were able to suggest how the indicators were used, but few were able to further develop this to gain the second mark.

Part (b)(i) did not prove problematic for a vast majority of the candidates. In part (b)(ii), a significant number of candidates omitted the question or misread the key, not noticing that the figures were in thousands and giving the answer as 'more than 250'.

Part (c)(i) elicited a wide range of responses. There were simplistic references to 'jobs' and 'money' without any further development, but a majority of the candidates could develop beyond this, e.g. "the money brought in will help to repay debts to MEDCs". The better candidates were able to give detailed descriptions, backed up with examples and set in the context of a real place. There were some excellent case studies dealing with Kenya. Few candidates made reference to the advantages of 'sustainable tourism, or 'eco-tourism.'

Part (c)(ii) was generally well done by a majority of the candidates. There were clear references to economic and environmental issues. Again, the best were set in the context of a real place. Kenya again featured heavily. A small minority gave case study examples from MEDCs, such as Spain.

Part (d) was generally well done by a majority of the candidates. However, some candidates did mis-interpret the key, to state that de-forestation levels were high throughout the region.

In part (e), a majority of the candidates showed a good understanding of the causes of de-forestation.

In part (f), some candidates did not give any balance in their answers, the most frequent imbalance being to omit the effects of global warming. A significant number of candidates did not understand the difference between global warming and ozone depletion, often confusing the two. There were however, many candidates who did clearly explain both the causes and effects, developing their answers well, also drawing on their scientific knowledge.

AQA

Foundation and Higher Tier

Centre-Assessed Coursework - 3033/C

General

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.

AQA

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.

Geography C (Short Course)

Foundation Tier

Paper – 3038/F

General

- Candidates appeared to be well prepared for the examination and generally showed a good level of understanding.

- Initial comments from centres suggest that the papers were seen as challenging but fair.

- Candidates appeared sympathetic to the style of the examination papers and they consequently appear to have worked effectively.

- Time was not an issue on the Foundation Tier but a small number of Higher Tier candidates failed to complete the paper.

- It is clear that there is limited time to develop detailed locational examples. Higher Tier candidates at time tried to write too much and drifted away from the question. With limited time, it is vital to address the commands and stay focused on the question.

- The examination switches between different types of approach to test the range of criteria. This is quite challenging and demands a certain flexibility in thinking which some candidates found problematic.

Focus for Development

- Be aware (and make candidates aware) that the examination paper reflects the specification in terms of content coverage.

- The philosophy of the specification is essentially about understanding issues and consideration of management strategies. It is useful to practice looking at issues and encouraging students to appreciate that management strategies always have advantages and disadvantages.

- The examination will always have an element of decision making/issues analysis. Be aware of the pre-released detail, it might be worth completing this part of the course close to the examination.

- Practice the idea of decision-making throughout the course.

- Each question will have resources attached to it. Encourage the use of resources and particularly identifying key elements from resources to use in question. Exercises throughout the course based on specific resources are useful preparation.

- An Ordnance Survey map extract may be included so it is always worth revising basic map reading and analytical skills.

- Photographs may be included in the examination. Practice using photographs by identifying key points on specific photographs or annotating photographs on practice sheets.

- There are always skill-based questions in the examination papers. At this level the expectation is that the skills will be carried out with a good level of accuracy. Emphasise this point and practice a range of appropriate skills.

- Candidates are expected to have some locational knowledge but there is a limited time to develop long answers. Encourage the technique of naming and locating an example early in an answer and developing points specific to the example. In this way general, unlocated observations can be kept to a minimum.

- Be aware that asking about key words and key word definitions is a quick way of assessing subject knowledge.

- The use of a revision grid for each sub-unit might be a helpful technique. The grid could be used to identify key ideas/key word definitions/management challenges and possible examples. It could also act as a revision checklist.

Managing Change in the Human Environment

Question 1

Part (a)(i) presented few problems with the majority of candidates scoring full marks.

In parts (ii) and (iii) there were a number of excellent responses to these questions and it was clear that candidates generally had a good understanding of the topic. Part (ii) presented few problems, while responses to part (iii) were more variable, often simply repeating points without developing the idea of 'how' shanty towns could be improved.

Parts (b)(i)&(ii) presented few problems and most candidates used the resources effectively to arrive at the correct answers.

Responses to part (iii) were variable and it was clear that the idea of 'quality of life' was not always understood. A reasonable number of candidates identified points such as 'less pollution' or 'less traffic' without fully developing the idea that these points might improve living conditions.

In part (iv) most candidates showed some understanding of the question, although a number appeared to think that cars were going to be totally banned.

In parts (c)(i), (ii) and (ii), Ordnance Survey map reading skills were variable; often totally correct, totally incorrect or not attempted.

Responses to part (iv) often reflected the quality of the skills shown in questions (i), (ii) and (iii). Those candidates who felt confident about using the map often did well and identified a number of factors from the map to explain the growth of Eastern Exeter.

It was clear that a small number of candidates were not sure about direction (use of 'east' in the question) even though the motorway gave them a clear reference.

There were a number of impressive responses to part (d)(i) and nearly all of the candidates used the resources effectively. In general terms, the quality of responses varied between those who had basically copied resources and added little, those who had selected points from the resource and developed them. At the highest level, candidates identified points and developed complex ideas in the support of one choice or considered both choices and came to a logical, well-balanced judgement.

A small number of candidates misread part (ii) and simply identified the disadvantages with nothing added. Other responses varied from a simple reverse observation ('it will create pollution' - 'reduce pollution') to more complex ideas about how the disadvantages could be reduced. Most responses were realistic and had a good understanding of scale and potential.

Managing the Physical Environment

Question 2

Part (a) presented few problems and most candidates used the resources effectively to arrive at correct answers.

In part (b) the use of the photographs was variable, with some candidates making impressive use of them whilst others virtually ignored them. There were some excellent responses, which identified a range of ideas such as footpath erosion, vegetation trampling, traffic and parking issues and habitat loss. A small number of candidates developed ideas about change to the built environment and marine pollution.

In part (c) those candidates who had identified pressures in question (b) often produced excellent answers, many of which included some locational detail or place context. The majority of responses featured ideas about traffic/parking, footpath management and litter.

The quality of responses varied in depth and realism, simple ideas such as 'more litter bins' or 'fine everybody who drops litter' not scoring very well.

Managing Economic Development

Question 3

In parts (a)(i) and (ii), most candidates used the resource effectively to develop correct answers. It was clear that a small number had no real idea about the concept of acid rain and found the question quite confusing.

The majority of candidates scored full marks in part (b), suggesting that they knew the key words or were able to show applied understanding in working them out from the definitions.

In part (c) many candidates showed a good level of understanding to what was quite a challenging question. There was a little confusion between 'global warming' and 'ozone' in some cases.

Responses included use of alternative / renewal energy (often in some detail), reduction in use of vehicles, better building techniques to save energy and more efficient energy use. A small number considered the idea of international agreements as a means of managing global pollution.

Higher Tier

Paper - 3038/H

Managing Change in the Human Environment

Question 1

In part (a)(i), candidates generally used the resource effectively to address the question. In most cases points from the resource were developed to explain the reason for migration. Some candidates used additional ideas and locational examples.

In part (ii) most candidates identified the basic problems of housing quality and conditions. Some then went on to develop these ideas by mentioning problems of disease and general living standards. At the highest level infrastructural and social problems were developed to give a more holistic view.

In (iii) there were some good answers to this part of the question with many candidates identifying a broad range of advantages. Consideration of disadvantages proved to be slightly more challenging.

(b)(i)&(ii) Most candidates used the resource effectively to develop sound ideas and showed a good understanding about traffic pressures and management.

In part (d) use of the Ordnance Survey map was variable and only a small number of candidates used map skills (grid references, distance, direction, etc) effectively to support their answer. There were a number of economic factors mentioned for the location of industrial estates but only limited reference to the physical geography.

In part (d)(i) there were a number of impressive responses to the question and nearly all of the candidates used the resources effectively. In general terms, the quality of responses varied between those who had basically copied resources and added little, those who had selected points from the resource and developed them. At the highest level, candidates identified points and developed complex ideas in the support of one choice or considered both choices and came to a logical, well-balanced judgement.

In part (ii) a small number of candidates misread the question and simply identified the disadvantages with nothing added. Other responses varied from a simple reverse observation ('it will create pollution' - 'reduce pollution') to more complex ideas about how the disadvantages could be reduced. Most responses were realistic and had a good understanding of scale and potential.

Managing the Physical Environment

Question 2

In part (a) most candidates identified a range of reasons for the increased use of National Parks, including social and economic factors. The main points considered were concerned with rising incomes, car ownership, improved access and changing social opportunities. A small number of candidates brought in considerations of environmental awareness and developing leisure activities.

In part (b) use of the photographs was variable, with some candidates making impressive use of them whilst others virtually ignored them. There were some excellent responses, which identified a range of ideas such as footpath erosion, vegetation trampling, traffic and parking issues and habitat loss. A small number of candidates developed ideas about change to the built environment and marine pollution.

Part (c) of the question presented no problems and candidates showed a good level of understanding. The main issues considered were footpath erosion, traffic, parking and litter problems.

AQA

Managing Economic Development

Question 3

In part (a) most candidates used the resource effectively and showed a good level of understanding. Specific quotes from the diagram and clear appreciation of the flows involved helped to achieve high marks.

Candidates expressed their ideas in part (b) about 'sustainable development' in different ways but generally managed to show some understanding.

In part (c) candidates found this question quite challenging. It was clear that most candidates understood what global warming was and had some appreciation of its causes. In most cases the idea of 'new technology' was expressed in terms of renewable energy or more efficient homes or vehicles. These ideas provided the basis for a sound answer, however, few candidates picked up the 'international agreements' part of the question effectively.

Foundation and Higher Tier

Centre-Assessed Coursework - 3038/C (Short Course)

General

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.

In many cases, there was no obvious difference between the coursework submitted for the Short Course and that produced for the Full Course. This was highlighted in centres that had candidates entered for both courses, it was impossible to distinguish between the two sets of enquiries. In the vast majority of cases, the work was identical and, therefore, interchangeable. Generally, no allowance was being made for the reduced word limit or the more detailed and specific marking criteria that was designed to lessen the demands made on candidates in completing Short Course enquiries. Centres were generally asking too much of their Short Course candidates.

It is also worth noting that, where centres did enter candidates for both courses and used identical coursework, the Short Course marking, in most cases, was more accurate than the Full Course. It would seem that teachers carry through the notion of one concept, three methods of data capture and three 'more complex' data presentation techniques to the Full Course and thus over-mark their scripts. It is important to remember that the Short Course coursework and the Full Course coursework have discrete sets of marking criteria. Centres assume that they are interchangeable and that the number of data collection techniques, for example, identified for Level 3 Methodology in the Short Course automatically fulfils the definition of 'a comprehensive range' in the Full Course and, therefore, qualifies the candidate for the equivalent level in the Full Course.

Another common problem was that the ability range of Short Course entrants tended to be more limited than that of the Full Course with a number of the candidates being frequently less motivated. Centres expected, nevertheless, to achieve a full mark range and, in some cases, ended up marking candidates and not work, giving marks for effort in exceptional circumstances.

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. Such centres relied upon group-generated fieldwork data and provided no real opportunity for candidates to focus their approach in a more meaningful and useful way. Such teacher-led enquiries,

however, should enable candidates to progress further and show their own initiative. This aspect was all too often ignored or forgotten.

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.

Finally, one interesting aspect of the Short Course is the variety of centres involved, not only in terms of the number of candidates entered but also in respect of the type of institutions involved. It is encouraging to report that a large number of these 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 is 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.

AQA

- 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 a sound geographical concept 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 concept that was 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, in that they involved a range of concepts, 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 concept was not clearly identified and was 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.

The major 'triggers' to accessing Level 3 marks in this section are the use of three data collection techniques and evidence of originality and initiative which has been justified. 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.

Using less than three 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, would all prohibit progression into the higher level, even if the candidate had produced an individual piece of work.

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. Even when appropriate techniques were used, a great number of candidates failed to achieve Level 3 as the techniques chosen lacked complexity. These centres were confusing 'attractive' with 'more complex' so Level 3 was frequently being awarded for what were basic techniques.

To access Level 3 marks, there has to be evidence of data presentation of three 'more complex' techniques being used. This would appear to be a significant increase in the demands made on the candidates when compared to the Level 2 criteria. This, however, is not necessarily the case with centres tending to overestimate the degree of complexity required to access this higher level. The goal of 'more complex' is achievable because with care, accuracy and a little elaboration, the majority of techniques have the potential to access Level 3. The annotation of photographs, for example, is a presentation skill 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.

It is worth stressing that 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.

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. 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 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.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Full Course

Foundation tier

Component	Maximum Mark (Raw)	Maximum Mark (Scaled)	Mean Mark (Scaled)	Standard Deviation (Scaled)
3033/C	30	60	12.8	5.4
3033/1F	60	60	32.3	9.0
3033/2F	80	120	43.9	12.0
Foundation tier overall code	170	240	123.9	31.7

		Max. mark	C	D	E	F	G
3033/C boundary mark	raw	30	15	12	9	6	3
	scaled	60	30	24	18	12	6
3033/1F boundary mark	raw	60	42	36	30	24	18
	scaled	60	15	12	9	6	18
3033/2F boundary mark	raw	80	54	45	37	29	21
	scaled	120	81	68	56	44	32
Foundation tier scaled boundary mark		240	148	125	102	80	56

AQA

Higher tier

Component	Maximum Mark (Raw)	Maximum Mark (Scaled)	Mean Mark (Scaled)	Standard Deviation (Scaled)
3033/C	30	60	21.1	5.3
3033/1H	60	60	35.3	7.6
3033/2H	80	120	48.0	11.0
Higher tier overall code	170	240	149.7	28.9

		Max. mark	A*	A	B	C	D	allowed E
3033/1C boundary mark	raw	30	27	23	19	15	12	
	scaled	60	54	46	38	30	24	
3033/1H boundary mark	raw	60	45	40	35	31	25	
	scaled	60	45	40	35	31	25	
3033/2H boundary mark	raw	80	64	56	48	41	35	
	scaled	120	96	84	72	62	53	
Higher tier scaled boundary mark		240	186	165	144	123	102	91

Provisional statistics for the award

Foundation tier (7766 candidates)

	C	D	E	F	G
Cumulative %	22.7	49.4	72.4	87.3	94.9

Higher tier (8505 candidates)

	A*	A	B	C	D	allowed E
Cumulative %	11.3	30.3	56.4	81.4	94.9	97.5

Overall (16271 candidates)

	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Cumulative %	5.9	15.8	29.5	53.4	73.2	85.5	92.6	96.2

AQA

Short Course

Foundation tier

Component	Maximum Mark (Raw)	Maximum Mark (Scaled)	Mean Mark (Scaled)	Standard Deviation (Scaled)
3038/C	30	30	12.1	4.7
3038/F	60	90	32.8	9.0
Foundation tier overall code	90	120	61.6	15.9

		Max. mark	C	D	E	F	G
3038/C boundary mark	raw	30	15	12	9	7	5
	scaled	30	15	12	9	7	5
3038/F boundary mark	raw	60	38	33	29	25	21
	scaled	90	57	50	44	38	32
Foundation tier scaled boundary mark		120	72	63	54	45	36

Higher tier

Component	Maximum Mark (Raw)	Maximum Mark (Scaled)	Mean Mark (Scaled)	Standard Deviation (Scaled)
3038/C	30	30	20.9	5.2
3038/H	60	90	37.9	7.9
Higher tier overall code	90	120	78.0	15.8

		Max. mark	A*	A	B	C	D	allowed E
3038/C boundary mark	raw	30	27	23	19	15	12	
	scaled	30	27	23	19	15	12	
3038/H boundary mark	raw	60	47	43	39	35	29	
	scaled	90	71	65	59	53	44	
Higher tier scaled boundary mark		120	97	87	77	68	56	

AQA

Provisional statistics for the award

Foundation tier (133 candidates)

	C	D	E	F	G
Cumulative %	30.8	48.9	66.9	78.2	88.0

Higher tier (56 candidates)

	A*	A	B	C	D	allowed E
Cumulative %	12.5	35.7	58.9	75.0	89.3	96.4

Overall (189 candidates)

	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Cumulative %	3.7	10.6	17.5	43.9	60.8	75.7	83.6	90.5

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).