General Certificate of Secondary Education

Geography 3033
Geography 3038 (Short Course)
Specification C

Report on the Examination

2006 examination – June series

- 3033   Full Course
- 3038   (Short Course)

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Foundation Tier

Paper 1 - 3033/1F

General

Centres report that candidates had found the examinations a challenging and interesting experience, and were very positive about the examination papers.

The decision-making exercise (DME) was seen as a mainstream issue, which was very clearly identifiable through the specification.

The change in the nature of the examination (being based outside of the United Kingdom) appeared to cause no difficulties.

Most candidates attempted every part of each question, so clearly there was sufficient time to address the papers.

The use of the resources was generally sound, with increasing numbers of candidates highlighting key points from the resources prior to attempting the questions. Only in a very few cases were the resources virtually ignored.

It was evident that centres are becoming increasingly comfortable with the style of the paper. An increasing number of candidates are identifying the commands effectively as well as developing their responses by bringing in additional detail or locational exemplification.

Focus for development

The paper has a specific topic focus, which is used to test the full range of the assessment criteria. It is always worth using the pre-released idea alongside the specification in order to consider how each of the assessment criteria might be reflected in the chosen topic. In order to prepare candidates effectively the following points might be worth considering.

1. Make sure that candidates can identify the commands and appreciate what they mean. The most common misunderstanding is between 'describe' and 'explain' commands. Responding to a 'describe' command by offering detailed explanation simply wastes time, while using detailed description in response to an 'explain' command will restrict the marks by at least one level.

2. In a resource-based examination, the prefix 'with the help of Figure ....' is making the point that there are allocated marks for ideas or examples beyond the resource and that using only the resource will limit access to the highest mark levels.

3. Build up a revision worksheet on the topic, which 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.

4. 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 issues can have positive as well as negative impacts. This is a point worth emphasising, especially at the Higher Tier level.

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

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

   In particular, the following points needs 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, particular the skills based questions. A number of small errors can add up to a significant loss of 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 candidates 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.

Question 1

Decision-Making Exercise

In parts (a)(i)(ii) and (iii) the majority of candidates used the resource (Figure 1) effectively to identify the correct responses.

In part (b)(i) most candidates used Figure 1 effectively to identify and label the named cities on the map provided. In part (ii) the majority of candidates completed the graph accurately, although it was apparent that a small number of candidates did not have the appropriate equipment to draw an accurate graph.

In part (d) candidates used the resources (Figures 1 and 3) to identify the rapid growth of developing cities in most cases. A number of candidates used the data in some detail, with some calculating approximate rates of growth. Few candidates identified the command, 'with the help of' and consequently there was limited information beyond the resource used.

Question 2

In part (a) most of the candidates used the resource (Figure 4) effectively to identify the information required for the bar chart. The majority of candidates produced a neat and accurate bar chart. It was evident that a small number of candidates did not have the appropriate equipment (a ruler).

In (b), most of the candidates had an excellent understanding of the question and were able explain the concepts of 'push' and 'pull' factors of migration. In most cases, candidates then went on to develop their response by using appropriate examples.

In part (c) candidates generally showed a good understanding of the terminology expressed in the question and had few difficulties in identifying the correct answers.

Responses to part (d) varied. The majority of the candidates used the resource (Figure 4) effectively to describe the situation of rural-urban migration. A significant proportion then went on to show a clear understanding about 'perceived opportunities and reality', often using case study examples. A small number of candidates used detailed information to illustrate the fact that the conditions migrants left behind in rural areas may well be better than those being experienced in urban areas. This avenue of thought often led to very sophisticated and impressive responses.

Question 3

Use of the photographs (Figure 5) was often very impressive, with many candidates identifying particular details and linking them clearly to health issues. There were often detailed comments about contaminated water with a number of specific diseases mentioned. A number of candidates went on to mention problems of dampness, inability to cook food properly and general issues of over-crowding. A small number of candidates broadened the discussion by bringing in points about the quality of housing in relation to hazards, and the potential for injury.

Question 4

In parts (a)(i) and (ii), the majority of the candidates used the resource (Figure 6) effectively to identify the correct responses.

Part (b) was completed successfully by most of the candidates. Use of the resource (Figure 6) was generally sound with the majority of candidates identifying a range of problems found in developing cities.

In part (c)(i) and (ii) the majority of the candidates used the resource (Figure 7) effectively to identify the correct responses and show an understanding of the question.

Question 5

In part (a)(i) and (ii) the majority of the candidates used the resource (Figure 8) effectively to address these questions successfully.

In part (b) most candidates showed a clear understanding of infant mortality and were able to make observations about how levels of infant mortality might reflect development. Beyond that, responses varied from basic observations about healthcare to very complex analysis about how infant mortality might reflect a range of factors including housing quality, employment levels, education, and general service provision.

In part (c) most candidates used the resource (Figure 7) effectively to show an appreciation of urban problems in Kolkata. At the lower levels, candidates simply repeated observations from the resource with limited development making basic comments about how a particular project might improve living conditions. At the higher levels, candidates matched up the key parts of the chosen project to the identified problems and made detailed, evaluative points beyond the resource. A small number of candidates then went on to offer a brief summary explaining how the chosen project might be more successful than the other options.

The majority of candidates in part (d) were able to identify a possible disadvantage of their chosen project. The most popular ideas were based around time and cost issues.

Foundation Tier

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 very good responses to data. Geographical skills such as interpreting population pyramids, tables of figures and bar graphs were very good, however interpreting a compound line graph proved more problematic for many candidates. Ordnance survey map work was not always well done in many cases. 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 candidates offered 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.

Questions 1 and 3 were the best answered, the subject matter appearing familiar to the majority of candidates.

Question 1

Managing Change in the Human Environment

In part (a)(i) the vast majority of candidates were able to interpret the population pyramids and part (a)(ii) was also correctly completed by a majority of candidates.

Part (b) was well answered, with most candidates showing some knowledge and understanding of problems caused by an ageing population. Relatively few candidates were able to sustain their answer to reach the maximum mark, but most were able to offer either one or two valid problems. The most able candidates referred to the dependency ratio, pension payments, health care, and housing problems.

Part (c)(i) was not generally well done, with the majority of the candidates failing to give a correct four-figure grid reference. In part (c)(ii) many candidates were able to correctly identify the symbols found at each of the six-figure grid references, but there remains a significant number who are unable to use grid references correctly.

In part (d)(i) most candidates were able to correctly locate the features onto the grid. However, there were candidates who do not locate the features with sufficient accuracy or who merely write the name of the features across an area of the grid that approximates to its location. In part (d)(ii) approximately half of the candidates did not give any indication that the bypass diverts traffic around the town centres, but focused on the A6 being a wider or faster road. In part (d)(iii), the majority of the candidates were able to state simple locational factors. The more able candidates at this Tier did offer some development to show the nature of the advantage, this most often being the benefits of locating close to the main road. Relatively few candidates were able to develop responses for more than one factor and access the maximum mark.

Question 2

Managing the Physical Environment

Part (a)(i) did not prove problematic the vast majority of the candidates and most were able to describe a difference in food consumption between LEDCs and MEDCs in part (a)(ii).

In part (b) most candidates showed some knowledge of the effects of food shortages on people in LEDCs with a majority giving either one or two valid effects. A smaller number were able to offer a third effect in order to gain the maximum mark.

Part (c) elicited a wide range of responses. Approximately one third of the candidates were unable to give an explanation that was worthy of credit, whilst most of the remainder gave simple, undeveloped responses to gain one or two marks. There was widespread confusion as to the purpose of fertilizer and pesticides. A relatively small number of the better candidates gave some well-developed explanations often through the use of case studies such as the Aswan Dam.

Parts (d)(i) and (d)(ii) did not prove problematic for a vast majority of the candidates.

Part (e) also elicited a wide range of responses. Again, approximately one third of the candidates were unable to give a reason for flooding that was worthy of credit, whilst most of the remainder gave simple, undeveloped statements such as heavy rainfall or melting snow to gain one or two marks. Relatively small numbers of candidates were able to offer some reference to physical process or use correct geographical vocabulary such as saturated ground, infiltration, or surface run-off in order to gain three or four marks.

Part (f)(i) saw widespread confusion between human/natural attractions, but most candidates were able to identify one or more features. In part (f)(ii) the majority of candidates were able to link a feature to an activity.

In part (g) approximately half of the candidates did not explain a physical process that was worthy of credit. Many candidates were able to offer simple references to erosion or deposition to gain 1 or 2 marks for a Level 1 response. Only a relatively small number of candidates were able to develop responses to show a clear understanding of physical processes. Those that did tended to choose stacks, waterfalls, and meanders as their examples of natural features.

In part (h)(i) many candidates simply stated that a honeypot was a place where tourists went, without reference to tourist pressure. Part (h)(ii) did not prove problematic for the majority of the candidates. Part (h)(iii) elicited a wide range of responses. Most candidates were able to offer simple management strategies to gain a Level 1 mark, but a smaller number of candidates was able to develop their answers with sufficient detail to gain a Level 2 mark, those that did, tended to use case study examples to good effect.

Question 3

Managing Economic Development

In part (a)(i) most candidates were able to interpret the graph correctly in order to gain one mark for stating that tourist arrivals increased. However, a relatively small number of candidates was able to expand upon this to gain the second mark. There was widespread misreading of the compound line graph. Similarly, in part (a)(ii) although the majority of candidates answered the question correctly, many read the cumulative total to give South Asia as the region of the world where most tourist arrivals took place in 2005. In part (a)(iii) relatively few candidates were able to sustain their answer to reach the maximum mark, but most were able to offer either one or two valid reasons for the changes in tourist arrivals. In part (a)(iv) the vast majority of candidates were able to identify three or four disadvantages of tourism. In part (a)(iv) most candidates gave simple, undeveloped statements such as litter and noise to gain one or two marks. Relatively small numbers of candidates were able to expand upon these problems to give some well-developed descriptions often through the use of case studies.

Parts (b)(i) and (b)(ii) did not prove problematic for the vast majority of the candidates, whereas in part (c), once again, although most gained 1 mark for stating that resources were finite, relatively few candidates were able to expand upon this to gain the second mark.

In part (d) most candidates were able to correctly identify either two or three renewable resources.

In part (e) approximately half of the candidates gained both marks, where a mark was lost it tended to be for giving the incorrect sector of industry.

Part (f) was generally well answered, with most candidates showing some knowledge and understanding of problems caused by the burning of fossil fuels. There was however, some confusion with ozone depletion.

In part (g) the majority of the candidates tended to offer simple, undeveloped responses such as naming alternative energy sources, to gain one or two marks. A relatively small number of candidates was able to explain how these reduce oil consumption and gain a Level 2 mark.

Higher Tier

Paper 1 - 3033/1H

Question 1

Decision-Making Exercise

The majority of candidates used Figure 1 effectively in part (a)(i) to identify and label the named cities on the map provided. In part (ii), it was evident that the majority of candidates had a clear understanding of 'distribution' and were able to offer a number of appropriate descriptive observations.

In part (b) the majority of candidates used the data effectively to compare the growth of LEDC and MEDC cities, many using the data in considerable detail and in some cases even calculating relative growth rates. A small number of candidates completely failed to use the data at all or simply described the growth of isolated cities without offering any real comparison.

There were a number of excellent responses to part (c). The major points considered were a lack of general administration; no census count, problems of rapid natural growth, very high density in slum areas and unregulated migration. All of these ideas provided an excellent vehicle for the question.

Question 2

In part (a)(i) most of the candidates used the resource (Figure 3) very effectively to identify a number of migratory factors, the majority of these showing a clear appreciation of 'push' and 'pull' factors. A significant proportion of the candidates also picked up the prefix 'to help you' and included other factors or locational detail to develop an effective response.

Part (ii) produced thoughtful responses to this question from candidates, with most identifying high rates of natural increase or making the point that migrants are often younger and this might increase fertility rates in cities.

Responses to part (b) varied. The majority of the candidates used the resource (Figure 4) effectively to describe the situation of rural-urban migration. A significant proportion then went on the show a clear understanding about 'perceived opportunities and reality', often using case study examples. A small number of candidates used detailed information to illustrate the fact that the conditions migrants left behind in rural areas may well be better than those being experienced in urban areas. This avenue of thought often led to very sophisticated and impressive responses.

In part (c), it was clear that relatively few candidates had detailed knowledge either 'improving farming' or 'rural enterprise schemes'. Responses were often quite generalised and vague with very limited locational context. In many cases, candidates considered the question of 'improving rural areas' in a holistic way by mentioning factors such as education, water supply or improving housing conditions. While many of these ideas were worthy of some credit, they often tended to be self-limiting.

Question 3

Use of the photographs (Figure 5) was often very impressive with many candidates identifying quite small details and linking them to general living conditions.

The prefix 'to help you' was picked up by the majority of candidates, who then went on to use specific locational examples or a broader range of ideas not immediately obvious from the photographs. Responses ranged from simple descriptive use of the photographs with limited development to complex observations about a wide range of factors, which might affect 'quality of life' in a number of ways.

Question 4

Candidates used the resource (Figure 6) in part (a) effectively to identify a number of problems associated with developing cities. A number then went on to specifically address the question by considering that 'housing was not the only problem'. The more sophisticated responses separated the problems into social, economic, and environmental problems, or considered that the major issue was economic and that all of the subsequent problems stemmed from a lack of even economic development.

A significant number of candidates failed to pick up the command, 'to help you' and often simply listed problems from the resource. This was usually self-limiting.

Part (b) was completed successfully by most of the candidates at a basic level by identifying Yelanka and Indiranger from Figure 6 as areas of contrasting wealth. Relatively few candidates then moved beyond the resource (as requested) to develop their ideas. Those that did often brought in ideas about contrasting housing conditions in developing cities (Rio de Janeiro) or considered Central Business Districts or High Tec Industrial areas as being obviously wealthy.

Question 5

Part (a) showed that candidates had a clear understanding of infant mortality and were able to make observations about how levels of infant mortality might reflect development. Beyond that, responses varied from basic observations about healthcare to very complex analysis about how infant mortality might reflect a range of factors including housing quality, employment levels, education, and general service provision.

In part (b) most candidates used the resource (Figure 7) effectively to show an appreciation of urban problems in Kolkata. At the lower levels, candidates simply repeated observations from the resource with limited development, making basic comments about how a particular project might improve living conditions. At the higher levels, candidates matched up the key parts of the chosen project to the identified problems and made detailed evaluative points beyond the resource. A small number of candidates then went on to offer a brief summary explaining how the chosen project might be more successful than the other options.

In part (c) disadvantages were often seen in a simplistic way, many candidates mentioning the cost of a project or the time taken for its completion. More developed responses identified key points from the resource and recognised that particular projects might affect some people negatively, both in the short and longer terms.

Higher Tier

Paper 2 - 3033/2H

General

The paper proved to be a very 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, tables of figures and bar graphs were very good, however interpreting a compound line graph proved more problematic for some candidates. Ordnance survey map work was generally well done by the majority of the candidates. Opportunities for extended writing were given in one or more parts of each question, and even the less able candidates at this Tier were able to offer a response, which demonstrated some good geographical understanding. The more able candidates were able to offer 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.

Questions 1 and 3 were the best answered, the subject matter appearing familiar to the majority of candidates.

Question 1

Managing Change in the Human Environment

In part (a)(i) the vast majority of candidates were able to complete the population pyramid, far fewer candidates missed out this style of question than in previous years. Part (a)(ii) was also correctly completed by the majority of candidates but a significant number did not describe changes to the overall population structure, but limited their answer to describing change to an individual bar in the population pyramids.

Part (b) was well answered, with many candidates showing good knowledge and understanding of problems caused by an ageing population. Many candidates were able to sustain their answer to reach the maximum mark.

Parts (c)(i), (c)(ii) and (c)(iii) were generally well done.

In part (d)(i) the majority of candidates were able to correctly locate the features onto the grid. However, there were candidates who do not locate the features with sufficient accuracy. In part (d)(ii) most candidates stated that the bypass diverts traffic around the town centres, but a significant number focused on the A6 being a wider or faster road. In part (d)(iii) the majority of the candidates were able to give detailed, well-developed locational factors often with supporting map evidence.

Question 2

Managing the Physical Environment

Part (a) was well answered by the majority of candidates, with good use of the figures to aid description. Some candidates however, did not describe actual changes in food consumption, but compared LEDCs and MEDCs in a single year.

Part (b) elicited a wide range of responses. Many candidates made only simplistic references to crops growing quicker or healthier and amongst the less able candidates at this tier, there was some confusion as to the purpose of fertilizer and pesticides and no differentiation made between high technology and intermediate technology. Many of the more able candidates did develop their answers to clearly show how their chosen method increased food production. The highest marks tended to come from candidates who used case study examples to good effect. There were some excellent descriptions of 'magic stones' in Burkina, the Aswan Dam, irrigation schemes in California, HYV wheat in India and the work of NGOs such as Oxfam and Comic Relief. Disadvantages were often dealt with better than the advantages.

Part (c) also proved to be an effective discriminator of geographical ability as again, there was a wide range of responses. A small number of candidates failed to score any marks, as they did not go beyond the resource provided, others gave simple, undeveloped statements such as heavy rainfall or melting snow to gain 1 or 2 marks. The majority of candidates were able to offer some reference to physical process or use correct geographical vocabulary such as saturated ground, infiltration, or surface run-off in order to gain 3 or 4 marks, whilst a significant number of the more able candidates did give very detailed explanations of physical processes with widespread use of geographical terminology.

Parts (d) and (e) were well answered by a majority of candidates, but some did confuse human/natural attractions.

Part (f) elicited a wide range of responses. Some candidates were able to offer only simple references to erosion, deposition, or plate movement to gain one or two marks for a Level 1 response. Most candidates however, were able to develop responses to show a clear understanding of physical processes and a significant number were again, able to give very detailed explanations of physical processes with widespread use of geographical terminology. Those that gained Level 3 marks tended to choose stacks, waterfalls, glacial troughs, corries, volcanoes and meanders/ox bow lakes as their examples of natural features.

Question 3

Managing Economic Development

In part (a)(i) most candidates were able to interpret the graph and make a comparative statement, but the use of figures to support the answer was not always done well. There was some misreading of the compound line graph. In part (a)(ii) candidates displayed a good range of ideas and a significant number were able to develop these and give detailed reasons for the changes in tourist arrivals. In part (a)(iii) the vast majority of candidates were able to identify advantages of tourism, mainly relating to employment and the effect on the economy. Most were able to develop their answers to show the nature of the advantage. The best candidates used case study examples to support their answer and there were some very detailed descriptions of the advantages of ecotourism in Brazil and the Campfire scheme in Kenya for example.

Parts (b)(i) and (b)(ii) did not prove problematic for the vast majority of the candidates. In part (b)(iii) the vast majority of candidates were able to offer very good descriptions of the problems caused by the burning of fossil fuels. There was however, occasional confusion with ozone depletion as well as an explanation of the causes of the problems by some candidates, when these were not required.

Part (c) elicited a range of responses. Some candidates made only simplistic references to oil running out and/or loss of money, but many candidates were able to sustain their answer to reach the maximum mark.

In part (d) there was again, a wide range of responses. Some candidates tended to offer simple, undeveloped responses such as naming alternative energy sources, to gain one or two marks, but the more able candidates were able to give very good descriptions of alternative energy sources such as HEP, solar power, geothermal energy, tidal and wind power and explained how these reduce oil consumption. There were also some good case study examples of these schemes along with others such as local recycling schemes or, the use bio-fuels in Brazil. There were also some detailed descriptions of how international agreements, such as the Kyoto protocol, could reduce oil consumption.

Some general points for development

There is a need for accuracy when answering skills questions e.g. completing graphs, using grid references.

Questions that demand knowledge and understanding of physical processes are not always well done. The best answers directly address the demands of the question. Good practice is evident amongst those candidates who highlight or underline the command words and key terms in the question. This helps them focus their answer and helps avoid inclusion of peripheral information.

Candidates who wish to continue their answer beyond the lines provided should do so on an additional answer sheet and not in the margins of the answer booklet.

Foundation and Higher Tiers

Centre-Assessed Coursework - 3033/C

General

The range of geographical skills and the breadth of knowledge displayed by many of the candidates continued to impress. The vast majority of work was appropriate: it related to the taught Specification and allowed clear differentiation between the candidates. Some excellent geography and an increasingly high standard of ICT made the process of moderation in most cases an interesting and enjoyable experience.

Teacher-led enquiries continued to be the norm with individual enquiries becoming an endangered species. The range of topics did show some variety; the most popular choice was the urban study, and within this CBD investigations were dominant. The trend towards purely physical studies continued, with rivers and coastlines by far the most popular.

In a few cases, 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, identical methodology written in the form of a series of instructions and the use of a limited range of similar data presentation techniques. As a result, only in the data interpretation and evaluation sections could the candidates' true ability be assessed.

Many centres continued to successfully apply the criteria. In the majority of cases, the centre's marks were within tolerance. They successfully identifed the 'triggers' required to access the different levels and applied the marking criteria in a uniform manner across the whole department. However, three years into this current cycle, with the Board continuing to put a lot of time and resources into coursework support, there remained a fairly small but persistent number of centres whose marking is identified as outside the tolerance. Where this happened, a common trend was to either over-mark at the top end of the mark range or under-mark at the bottom. In the majority of cases the discrepancies in the marking were very small but in a number of cases there was insufficient understanding of what was required, and no appreciation of the 'triggers' necessary to move a candidate from one level to another. As a result, mark differences were significant.

Administration

Administration, as ever was done meticulously by a few, adequately by most and haphazardly by a significant minority. The following areas remain from one year to the next troublesome for centres and as a result prove time-consuming and problematic for moderators.

Centres, with 20 or fewer candidates, should ensure that all their candidates' work, together with the PINK AND YELLOW copies of the Centre Mark Sheets or an EDI print out (if an EDI print out is being used then centres must make sure that the centre name and number is included on the print out). These 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 PINK AND YELLOW copies of the Centre Mark Sheets (CMS) (or two copies of the EDI printouts) should arrive with the moderator by the deadline indicated, allowing time for postal delivery. The moderator will return the YELLOW 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 must be attached to the relevant pieces of work. It should be completed 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 (for the first time this year failure of the candidate to sign the CRF form will result in zero marks being awarded for the coursework). As well as totalling up the marks awarded on the reverse side of the CRF, the total mark is also required to be placed in the box provided on the front of the CRF. This allows moderators to place the work from a centre in rank order without having to open every plastic wallet in order to access the total mark. The majority of centres continued to ignore these boxes or simply choose to place a tick in the relevant box. In one or two cases, centres continued to use out of date CRF forms and, as a result, did not provide all the information required, for example summative statements and teacher signatures. The incorrect addition of marks on the CRF forms and the inaccurate transfer of the total mark to the Centre Mark Sheet remain a common problem. A significant number of centres continue to fail to supply the Centre Declaration Sheet with the sample.

A significant amount of coursework continues to be 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 comes 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 postal sorting office.

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 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 are elements that have been found to be creditworthy. If a candidate failed to submit work or has withdrawn then 'X' should be encoded. Leaving a blank box next to a candidate's name on the CMS is not an option.

The quality and quantity of teacher comments/annotations 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. A minority of centres continue to provide only limited evidence that internal assessment has 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 bare no relation to the content or the mark scheme. 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

It is important to remember that each assessment objective consists of three levels, each level statement containing a number of different criteria. The application of the marking criteria is not based on a 'best-fit' model and for a candidate to achieve a particular level of performance he/she has to provide evidence of all the differing elements that make up that level statement. The quality and consistency of evidence provided determines the mark given within that particular level. A number of centres assumed that if a candidate fulfilled the criteria for a particular level, then automatically they should be awarded the top mark in that level. This was not the case. This approach was particularly common when it came to higher ability candidates and L3 statements. There was evidence to suggest maximum marks were being awarded in the section when not being supported in the written evidence. When this strategy is used across all the sections of the marking criteria then inevitably it will lead to the centre marks being outside the tolerance recommended by the Board.

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 through description and explanation clearly demonstrated understanding of the key concepts and then went on to apply this understanding to the results of their enquiry.

Some misunderstood the notion of 'application' 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. 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.

In an effort to ensure a wide range of geographical terminology being used in the enquiry, a number of centres suggested that candidates included within their introductions a glossary of terms. This was 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.

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 is worth bearing in mind 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. Evidence suggested that some candidates failed to find the right balance, spending most of their time and energy describing the location whilst neglecting the concepts underpinning the work.

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 provided a detailed description of a range of valid primary data collection methods that were to be used in the investigation. Access to Level 3 marks, however, continued to prove to be a little more difficult even for the higher ability candidates.

Originality in data collection and the justification of data collection methods used were 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, e.g. the use of a different photograph by a candidate or the difference of one question compared to the group questionnaire. '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.

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.

This is the only section of the marking criteria where originality and initiative is credited. A number of centres assumed evidence of originality in other sections (notably data presentation) was sufficient to justify the awarding of Level 3 in this section.

It must be stressed that marks are awarded for valid data collection methods. In other words, 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 less able 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

In many cases, candidates fulfilled the criteria using presentation techniques, which demonstrated flair and imagination, thus 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 take account of the key 'triggers' of accuracy, appropriateness, range, and complexity. 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.

To access Level 2 and Level 3 marks in this section, all candidates must 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 quality of written communication remained 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 continues to be a useful discriminator with progression through the levels being determined by the key 'triggers' of explanation, analysis, and linkage. In the best enquiries 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, demonstrated links between the data sets, and drew 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, failing to identify links either between the data sets or links back to the original hypothesis. Thus, they 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 less able 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 is still 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 increasing 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 continues to prove to be the weakest element.

In the most effective enquiries, candidate's evaluation statements were detailed and specific to the enquiry rather than being vague and generic. Furthermore, instead of discussing the three components of the criteria separately they proceeded to link the three components identifying the fact that poorly/faulty methodology led to inaccurate results and that conclusions based upon such results had, therefore, questionable validity.

Evaluation presented a problem for some centres with candidates having a tendency to write in congratulatory terms rather than highlighting limitations. 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.

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 and suggest how improvements could be made.

(Short Course) - Foundation Tier

3038/F

General

Very few candidates failed to complete the examination paper, indicating time clearly was not a problem. The majority of candidates appear to be well prepared for the examination. Comments from centres and the initial a spread of marks suggest that both papers were accessible and a sound reflection of the specification. Candidates are increasingly using the space and mark allocation for each question effectively. In most cases, candidates are identifying the commands of the questions. The use of locational or knowledge-based examples was variable. It was often a significant point of differentiation on the Higher Tier paper. It was evident that a small number of Foundation Tier candidates might have been better served by entering the Higher Tier.

Focus for development

- There are now a number of past papers available from the publications department and the AQA website and these clearly reflect the style of the examination. The use of these papers to ensure that candidates are familiar and comfortable with the style and layout of the paper is vital.

- Given that candidates face only one examination paper it is important to fully appreciate that it has to be used to cover the whole range of the assessment criteria. As such, there will be skills based questions, use of data and the need to show knowledge and understanding. This demands both quick thinking and changes to thinking patterns. Candidates do not always find this easy, especially in a pressured situation, so practice is an essential part of the preparation for this paper.

- The specification is essentially based on identifying issues and considering the management of issues. An issue-based teaching approach that generates thinking skills and careful use of resources is good preparation for the final written assessment.

- The use of locational examples is important, especially in the Higher Tier examination paper where it is often a differentiator. Encourage candidates to learn one example for each unit. Practice using questions where the answer can be built around the locational example rather than giving a general answer and tacking a place name on at the end.

- The testing of terminology is often done by using definition boxes on the Foundation Tier or using specific terms in Higher Tier questions.

- Identify the key terms through the specification and build up a key definitions page as you work through the course.

- Ensure that candidates are aware of the locational context of questions. The most common errors are mixing up MEDCs and LEDCs or rural and urban areas.

- There will always be a small element of issues-analysis in the examination paper - often expressed through the decision-making exercise (DME) topic. Identify the key ideas from the DME topic and ensure that candidates have a clear understanding of them.

- It is clear that a small number of candidates are not properly equipped for the examination. Encourage candidates to make sure that they have pens/pencils/rubber/ruler and perhaps some coloured pencils. They may have to draw or complete graphs and there could be a question where an annotated sketch /diagram might be useful.

- The use of a revision grid for each sub-section is a helpful technique. The grid could be used to identify the key words or definitions. It might then be used to identify problems/challenges and suggestion management strategies. Locational or topic-based examples could be added.

Question 1

Managing Change in the Human Environment

In part (a)(i), most candidates identified 'factories' and 'cars' as the causes of pollution. A small number interpreted the word 'cause' as type of pollution. In part (ii), candidates used the resource effectively to describe the problems caused by pollution, with points about 'smog' and the general effect on 'people and buildings' being identified. A significant number failed to pick up the command 'to help you' and consequently did not fully develop their responses.

In part (b), candidates showed a good understanding of the terminology and in most cases scored full marks.

Responses to part (c) were generally sound, with a significant number of candidates suggesting a range of advantages of living in a town centre. The more developed responses included comments about nearness to work/leisure/shopping and the ease of movement because of public transport. A small number of candidates developed this theme even further by considering the advantages of not having to own a car and the relative cost of public transport.

Part (d) presented few problems and the majority of candidates were able to identify Taunton from the resource. Understanding of the 'rural-urban' fringe in part (ii) was sound. It was expressed in a number of different ways, most of which were appropriate. Reponses to part (iii) were variable. A number of candidates simply copied from the resource and offered no real explanation whilst some developed a very thorough response by clearly explaining the advantages of being close to both town and countryside. Part (iv) was generally answered well, with a number of candidates scoring full marks. The majority of candidates clearly linked the idea of 'more houses' to 'more cars' and this leading to added traffic problems. A number went on to consider that living in the rural-urban fringe would further increase traffic because of the need to drive for work or to shop. The most sophisticated responses took this approach even further by identifying 'rush hours' (going/returning to work) as particular traffic problems.

Candidates general used the resource in part (e)(i) effectively to identify a range of migratory factors; the majority showed a clear understanding of the distinction between push and pull factors. In part (ii), the descriptive use of the photographs was often excellent, with many candidates picking out quite fine details. Making the link between describing the conditions and effects on peoples' quality of life was more problematic. In some cases, it was a simple question of saying that the conditions would cause health problems whilst the more developed responses identified specific health issues or brought in points about personal security.

Responses varied in part (f)(i) from simple copying from the resource with limited development, to quite sophisticated identification of points from the resource, which were clearly linked back to the identified problems. Most candidates understood the idea of a 'disadvantage' in the context of the question in part (ii). The more popular responses picked out the 'cost' of projects as a disadvantage or the fact that individual projects do not resolve all of the identified problems.

Question 2

Managing the Physical Environment

In part (a)(i), most candidates identified two clear reasons why the physical environment might attract people. Responses to part (ii) were variable. Most candidates identified 'pressures' from the resource but a significant number failed to pick up the command 'to help you', and consequently failed to fully develop their responses.

In (b)(i), few candidates had difficulty with this question; the majority were able to identify two reasons for the growth in numbers visiting National Parks. In part (ii), there were a variety of responses, some of which were more effective than others. A number of candidates identified 'Park and Ride' as a potential type of traffic management. This approach, when well developed, was often very successful. Other avenues of approach were 'pedestrianisation', 'traffic management', and the use of speed cameras (no doubt the idea coming from Figure 6). The success of using these ideas was variable; often responses were quite superficial and descriptive.

Question 3

Managing Economic Development

The majority of candidates had no real problems with part (a) of this question.

Parts (b) and (c) appeared to be very accessible to candidates, and they showed a good understanding of the terminology and ideas being examined.

In part (d) a number of candidates did not pick up the word **or** in the question and consequently wrote about both power generation and transport. There were a significant number of excellent ideas, including the use of alternative energy and more efficient motor vehicles. It was clear that candidates had a sound understanding of the question, with many making the point that using alternative energy reduced the need to burn as much fossil fuel, therefore potentially reducing pollution.

(Short Course) Higher Tier

3038/H

Question 1

Managing Change in the Human Environment

In part (a)(i) candidates showed good understanding of the question and were able to explain how industrial growth and vehicle use has increased environmental problems. The resource was generally used very effectively and most candidates picked up the 'to help you' command and developed their responses accordingly.

In part (ii) responses were variable. Most candidates were able to show an understanding of traffic management in general terms. a number then went on to describe specific management schemes and consider their advantages and disadvantages. At the highest level, candidates showed an increasingly balanced approach in relation to the advantages and disadvantages.

Responses to part (b)(i) were generally sound, with a significant number of candidates suggesting a range of advantages of living in a town centre. The more developed responses included comments about nearness to work/leisure/shopping and the ease of movement because of public transport. A small number of candidates developed this theme even further by considering the advantages of not having to own a car and the relative cost of public transport.

Part (c)(i) presented no difficulty, virtually every candidate showed a sound appreciation of what was meant by the 'rural-urban fringe'. In part (ii) candidates showed a good understanding of the question and made clear observations, which highlighted the fact that the rural-urban fringe has the advantages of both rural and urban areas. Most candidates used the resource effectively and developed the idea further by suggesting that the area gave the opportunity to work in the city whilst having the leisure opportunities of the countryside nearby. Responses to part (iii) were variable. A number of candidates simply used the avenue of 'extra cars mean more pollution and congestion'. At the higher level, more specific detail was evident; including observations about habitat loss and the impact on water courses.

Part (d)(i) was generally completed very effectively with candidates using the resource (Figure 3) in some detail and then adding thoughtful observations that highlighted a range of push and pull migratory factors.

Responses varied in part (e) from simple copying from the resource with limited development, to quite sophisticated identification of points from the resource, which were clearly linked back to the identified problems.

Question 2

Managing the Physical Environment

In part (a)(i) very few candidates had difficulties with this question, the majority being able to name two National Parks. The Peak District and the Lake District were the most popular options. Responses to part (ii) were variable. Most candidates identified 'pressures' from the resource but a significant number failed to pick up the command 'to help you', and consequently failed to fully develop their responses.

In part (b) the majority of candidates identified Park and Ride as the most popular strategy to manage traffic problems. Other chosen options included a number of parking strategies and the development of public transport. Responses to each of the chosen strategies were variable, ranging from simple, descriptive observations to complex analysis, clearly highlighting the advantages and disadvantages of the chosen strategy.

Question 3

Managing Economic Development

In part (a), the majority of candidates used the resource (Figure 6) effectively to answer this question correctly.

In part (b) most candidates had a sound understanding about how acid rain is formed; the majority used a simple sketch to explain the link to both air pollution and climatic conditions.

In (c) the majority of candidates understood what was meant by an 'environmental pressure group'; a number included an example, the most popular of which was 'Greenpeace'.

In part (d) a number of candidates did not pick up the word **or** in the question and consequently wrote about both power generation and transport. There were a significant number of excellent ideas, including the use of alternative energy and more efficient motor vehicles. It was clear that candidates had a sound understanding of the question, with many making the point that using alternative energy reduced the need to burn as much fossil fuel, therefore potentially reducing pollution.

Foundation and Higher Tiers

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

General

The profile of the typical Short Course candidate, and the function the Short Course performs within the school curriculum, continues to change. There is an increasing variety of small institutions involved, a significant number of which cannot be classed as mainstream schools. Centres are no longer entering candidates in large numbers and entry is no longer limited to Key Stage 4. This is having a major impact on the quality of work produced, as a number of candidates would appear to be less motivated or have yet fully developed their geographical skills. Centres expect, nevertheless, to achieve a full mark range and, in some cases, end up marking candidates and not the work, giving marks for effort in exceptional circumstances. As a result, a large number of centres' marks continue to be outside the tolerance.

There remains no obvious difference between the coursework submitted for the Short Course and that produced for the Full Course. No allowance is made generally for the reduced word limit or the more detailed and specific marking criteria that are designed to lessen the demands made on candidates in completing Short Course enquiries. Centres generally were asking too much of their Short Course candidates working on the erroneous premise that more work equalled more marks.

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/marks in the Full Course.

Mirroring the Full Course, teacher-led enquiries continue to be the norm with individual enquiries becoming an endangered species. The range of topics did show some variety; the most popular choice was the urban study, and within this CBD investigations dominant. The trend towards purely physical studies continues with rivers and coastlines by far the most popular.

Administration

Administration, as ever, was done meticulously by a few, adequately by most and haphazardly by a significant minority. The following areas remain from one year to the next troublesome for centres and as a result prove time consuming and problematic for moderators.

The majority of Short Course centres, have 20 or fewer candidates, and therefore, they should ensure that all their candidates work together with, the PINK AND YELLOW copies of the Centre Mark Sheets or an EDI print out (if an EDI print out is being used then centres must make sure that the Centre name and number is included on the print out). These 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 PINK AND YELLOW copies of the Centre Mark Sheets (or two copies of the EDI printouts) should arrive with the moderator by the deadline indicated allowing time for postal delivery. (Some centres only sent one copy of the CMS or EDI, which meant a photocopy had to be made by the moderator). The moderator will return the YELLOW 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 (for the first time this year failure of the candidate to sign the CRF form will result in zero marks being awarded for the coursework). As well as totalling up the marks awarded on the reverse side of the CRF, the total mark is also required to be placed in the box provided on the front of the CRF. This allows moderators to place the work from a centre in rank order without having to open every plastic wallet in order to access the total mark. The majority of centres continue to ignore these boxes or simply choose to place a tick in the relevant box. In one or two cases, centres continue to use out of date CRF forms and, as a result, do not provide all the information required, for example summative statements and teacher signatures. The incorrect addition of marks on the CRF forms and the inaccurate transfer of the total mark to the Centre Mark Sheet remain a common problem. A significant number of centres continue to fail to supply the Centre Declaration Sheet with the sample.

A significant amount of coursework continues to be 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.

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 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 are elements that have been found to be creditworthy. If a candidate failed to submit work or has withdrawn then 'X' should be encoded. Leaving a blank box next to a candidate's name on the CMS is not an option.

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. A minority of centres continue to provide only limited evidence that internal assessment has 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 bare no relation to the content or the mark scheme. 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. In these cases, the ramifications are felt across the whole centre.

Marking Criteria

It is important to remember that each assessment objective consists of three levels, each level statement containing a number of different criteria. The application of the marking criteria is not based on a 'best-fit' model and for a candidate to achieve a particular level of performance he/she has to provide evidence of all the differing elements that make up that level statement. The quality and consistency of evidence provided determines the mark given within that particular level. A number of centres are assuming that if a candidate fulfils the criteria for a particular level, then automatically they should be awarded the top mark in that level. This is not the case. This approach is particularly common when it comes to higher ability candidates and L3 statements. There is evidence to suggest maximum marks being awarded in the section even though this is not supported by the written evidence. If this strategy is used across all the sections of the marking criteria then inevitably it will lead to the centre marks being outside the tolerance recommended by the Board.

Applied Understanding

In the majority of cases, enquiries were well organised, based on a single, clear, manageable hypothesis, underpinned by one key 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 through description and explanation clearly demonstrated understanding of the key concept and then went on to apply this understanding to the results of their enquiry.

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. 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.

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. 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 is worth bearing in mind, 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. Evidence suggest that some candidates failed to find the right balance, spending most of their time and energy describing the location whilst neglecting the concepts underpinning the work.

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 two primary data collection methods that were to be used in the investigation. Access to Level 3 marks, however, continues to prove to be a little more difficult even for the higher ability candidates.

The major 'trigger' to accessing Level 3 is the use of three data collection techniques, described and justified with at least one of the techniques demonstrating originality on behalf of the candidate. 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. For example, the use of a different photograph by a candidate or the difference of one question compared to the group questionnaire. '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.

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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 three 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 take account of the key 'triggers' of accuracy, appropriateness, range, and complexity. 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.

To be able 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 three '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 quality of written communication remains 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 continues to be a useful discriminator with progression through the levels being determined by the key 'triggers' of explanation, analysis, and linkage. In the best enquiries 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, demonstrated links between the data sets, and drew 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, failing to identify links either between the data sets or links back to the original hypothesis. Thus they 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 is still 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 appear to have an increasing 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 continues to prove to be the weakest element.

In the most effective enquiries, candidate's evaluation statements were detailed and specific to the enquiry rather than being vague and generic. Furthermore, instead of discussing the three components of the criteria separately they proceeded to link the three components identifying the fact that poorly/faulty methodology led to inaccurate results and that conclusions based upon such results had, therefore, questionable validity.

Evaluation presented a problem for some centres with candidates having a tendency to write in congratulatory terms rather than highlighting limitations. 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.

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 and suggest how improvements could be made.

Summary

In previous years, the Principal Moderator's report provided as much information as possible about the year's findings and offered guidance as to how to avoid future pitfalls. However, this information overload would appear to have had little impact - the percentage of centres marking outside the Board's tolerance remains problematic. In response, there has been a concerted attempt to make the report focussed and concise. The hope is that by concentrating on the core elements for improvement, centres will be better equipped to examine their practices and bring about positive change where needed.

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	25.8	10.2
3033/1F	60	60	40.6	7.3
3033/2F	80	120	63.4	15.5
Foundation Tier overall	170	240	129.9	27.2

		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	45	41	37	33	29
	scaled	60	45	41	37	33	29
3033/2F boundary mark	raw	80	52	44	37	30	23
	scaled	120	78	60	56	45	35
Foundation Tier scaled boundary mark		240	149	129	109	90	71

Higher Tier

Component	Maximum Mark (Raw)	Maximum Mark (Scaled)	Mean Mark (Scaled)	Standard Deviation (Scaled)
3033/C	30	60	42.8	10.2
3033/1H	60	60	39.4	6.5
3033/2H	80	120	66.2	14.8
Higher Tier overall	170	240	148.4	26.2

		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	41	37	33	30	-
	scaled	60	45	41	37	33	30	-
3033/2H boundary mark	raw	80	58	51	44	38	32	-
	scaled	120	87	77	66	57	48	-
Higher Tier scaled boundary mark		240	179	160	140	120	102	95

Provisional statistics for the award

Foundation Tier (5827 candidates)

	C	D	E	F	G
Cumulative %	26.1	53.6	76.0	88.6	94.5

Higher Tier (8121 candidates)

	A*	A	B	C	D	allowed E
Cumulative %	12.7	33.5	61.8	85.7	96.2	98.2

Overall (13948 candidates)

	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Cumulative %	7.4	19.5	36.0	60.8	78.4	88.9	94.2	96.7

Short Course

Foundation Tier

Component	Maximum Mark (Raw)	Maximum Mark (Scaled)	Mean Mark (Scaled)	Standard Deviation (Scaled)
3038/C	30	30	8.8	4.4
3038/F	60	90	53.5	12.1
Foundation Tier overall	90	120	62.3	14.6

		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	34	31	28	25
	scaled	90	57	51	47	42	38
Foundation Tier scaled boundary mark		120	68	61	55	49	43

Higher Tier

Component	Maximum Mark (Raw)	Maximum Mark (Scaled)	Mean Mark (Scaled)	Standard Deviation (Scaled)
3038/C	30	30	18.9	4.5
3038/H	60	90	59.4	8.9
Higher Tier overall	90	120	78.3	11.6

		Max. mark	A*	A	B	C	D	allowed E
3038/C boundary mark	raw	30	30	25	20	15	12	-
	scaled	30	30	25	20	15	12	-
3038/H boundary mark	raw	60	45	42	39	36	32	-
	scaled	90	68	63	59	54	48	-
Higher tier scaled boundary mark		120	94	86	77	69	60	55

Provisional statistics for the award

Foundation Tier (114 candidates)

	C	D	E	F	G
Cumulative %	35.1	51.8	70.2	79.8	86.0

Higher Tier (52 candidates)

	A*	A	B	C	D	allowed E
Cumulative %	9.6	26.9	46.2	71.2	90.4	92.3

Overall (166 candidates)

	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Cumulative %	3.0	8.4	14.5	46.4	63.9	77.1	83.7	88.0

Definitions

Boundary Mark: the minimum (scaled) mark required by a candidate to qualify for a given grade.

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 candidate lie in 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).

Uniform Mark: a score on a standard scale which indicates a candidate's performance. The lowest uniform mark for grade A* is always 90% of the maximum uniform mark for the unit, similarly grade A is 80%, grade B is 70%, grade C is 60%, grade D is 50%, grade E is 40%, grade F is 30% and grade G is 20%. A candidate's total scaled mark for each unit is converted to a uniform mark and the uniform marks for the units will be added in order to determine the candidate's overall grade.