



General Certificate of Secondary Education

Geography 3038 Short Course *Specification C*

3038/H Higher Tier

Report on the Examination

2008 examination - June series

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Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

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3038/H

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. General responses to the examination papers and the spread of marks suggest that both papers were accessible and a sound reflection of the specification. In most cases, candidates are identifying the commands of the questions. The use of locational or knowledge-based examples was variable. Candidates who developed their responses by using examples often scored highly, especially on the Higher Tier paper. It was evident that a small number of Higher Tier candidates might have been better suited to the Foundation Tier paper and that a small number of Foundation Tier candidates would have coped with the Higher Tier paper.

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. Practise 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.

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.

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.

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), the majority of candidates used Figure 1 effectively to explain what is meant by 'push' and 'pull' factors of migration and were then able to identify examples of each.

In part (b)(i), the resource in Figure 2 was used effectively to illustrate the range of problems found in developing cities, with a number of candidates making clear reference to specific points within the resource. Particular focus on 'economic' or 'environmental' problems was limited and in some cases it was clear that the terms 'economic' and 'environmental' were not fully understood.

The question comment, 'and your own knowledge' was identified by about half of the candidates. Failure to bring in some individual knowledge generally restricted candidates and was consequently self-limiting.

In part (ii), candidates showed a sound general understanding of the question and were able to offer clear links between living conditions and health. Responses varied from generalised observations about 'pollution' and 'disease' to more sophisticated points which drew out the links in more detail. Observations about lack of water and sewage systems creating the opportunity for water-borne disease were frequently used, as were comments about the link between population density and the spread of disease. In a small number of cases more diverse observations were made for example the lack of jobs leading to crime and a general lack of safety and security.

In part (iii), a number of candidates failed to appreciate the choice within the question and consequently made observations about both 'self-help' and 'local authority schemes'. This was often self-limiting. Most candidates showed an understanding of what was meant by improving living conditions, but generally failed to base their response on a particular example. Consequently observations were often generic points about improving housing or services and lacked specific detail.

The majority of candidates completed the graph accurately in part (d)(i) and consequently scored full marks on this question.

In part (c)(i), a number of candidates failed to appreciate the choice within the question and consequently made observations about both 'public transport' and 'traffic management'. This often led to vague or general ideas that were not fully developed. Those candidates who focused on one of the areas ('public transport' was the more popular) often produced effective responses and brought in appropriate examples. In a small number of cases it was clear that candidates did not realise what was meant by 'traffic management'.

Part (d)(i), presented few problems and candidates were able to identify a range of development activities taking place within the rural-urban fringe.

Responses to part (ii) varied from general points about ‘pollution’ and ‘taking up countryside’ to a more sophisticated appreciation of habitat loss. A small number of candidates developed the theme by suggesting that many residents of urban-fringe developments would be commuters and consequently there would be added demand for roads and increasing congestion problems. These types of ‘linked’ approaches often led to very successful responses.

Question 2

In part (a), candidates showed a good understanding of the reasons for the growing popularity of National Parks. A small number of candidates failed to identify the word ‘increased’ as the key word in the question and mentioned basic generic points not linked to change. This was totally self-limiting.

In (b) there were a number of excellent observations made in reference to this question and it was clear that candidates had a sound understanding of why the growing number of holiday homes might create pressures in National Parks.

In part (c), most candidates showed a good general appreciation of the issues involved in managing Lake Windermere. The choice of ‘yes’ or ‘no’ was fairly evenly split and either choice gave candidates a good opportunity to develop their understanding. Responses generally varied from largely copied observations from the resource with no real development to carefully selected observations which were used to develop a more thoughtful answer.

Question 3

In part (a), candidates used Figure 5 effectively to describe the changes in carbon dioxide emissions, often identifying both overall trends and short-term changes within the trend. The reasons for the changes were not always considered in any detail; often quite vague points were made and not fully developed.

In (b), the link between carbon dioxide emissions and global warming was clearly understood by the majority of candidates, but the process was less clear. A number of candidates appeared to be confused between ‘global warming’, ‘acid rain,’ and ‘holes in the ozone layer’.

In part (c), a number of candidates failed to appreciate the choice within the question and consequently made observations about both ‘international agreements’ and ‘technology’. This was often self-limiting. It was clear that very few candidates had any real understanding of ‘international agreements’ and in most cases small scale, local initiatives such as congestion charges were mentioned in this context. Those candidates who focused on technology often did much better and frequently produced some excellent responses. The most popular considerations were alternative energy, non-fossil fuel based vehicles and carbon neutral housing.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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