AQA

**General Certificate of Secondary Education**

# Geography 4035
*Specification B*

**40351F   Managing places in the 21st century**

# Report on the Examination
*2010 examination - June series*

**Introduction**

Candidates had to answer one question on either The Coastal Environment or The Urban Environment. A number of candidates attempted both questions. The coastal environment option was the more popular choice.

**General points**

- Very few candidates failed to complete the paper.
- Feedback suggested that centres had found the examination a sound reflection of the specification and a good test of the knowledge and understanding embodied within the specification.
- It was evident that the majority of centres had prepared their candidates effectively. Teachers are to be congratulated on their efforts towards ensuring that candidates had a sound grasp of the concepts that underpin the course.
- The use of resources was generally good. A significant proportion of candidates used clearly and appropriately quoted evidence from resources in their answers. However, the use of the Ordnance Survey map extract in Question 2 was variable. It was evident that a number of candidates did not really understand the demands of map reading skills and interpretation. Consequently straight forward marks were lost.
- The use of examples was variable. In many cases candidates brought in well developed, appropriate case studies while in others the instruction to include 'examples' or 'own knowledge' was largely ignored.
- The instruction to include 'own knowledge' can be the development of ideas expressed in the question <u>or</u> locational knowledge (examples).

**KEY POINT**: Remember the key instruction at the beginning of every examination paper: 'Use case studies to support your answers where appropriate'. Encourage candidates to do this – it is often one of the ways that the higher level marks can be accessed.

- The majority of candidates responded to the question commands effectively.
- The use of the mark allocations and writing spaces was generally good, the majority of candidates taking the opportunity to use 'extra space'. A small number of candidates used a 'listing' approach to some of the longer questions. This was often self-limiting and should be discouraged unless time is an issue.
- It was encouraging to see the use of annotated diagrams to explain physical processes and the developmental sequence of landforms. Done well, this is a very effective way of showing knowledge and understanding.
- It was evident that a small number of candidates were not properly equipped. The lack of a ruler can affect levels of accuracy when completing graphs or measuring distances. At this level, basic skills demand a high level of accuracy.

**Focus for development**

- **Addressing commands:** make sure that candidates are aware of the question commands and understand what they mean. The most common misunderstanding is between 'describe' and 'explain' commands. Responding to a 'describe' command by offering detailed explanations will waste time, while using description in response to an 'explain' command will restrict the possible marks for the question.

- **Addressing the full instruction**: question instructions which ask for : 'examples', 'own knowledge', 'using Figure … and your own knowledge' are making clear points that there are marks available for those candidates who address these instructions.

- **Use the resource effectively**: questions will often ask for use of a resource or use of a resource and own knowledge. Using a resource does not simply mean copying parts of it: to access higher marks there is a need to select appropriate evidence from the resource and bring in linked ideas that have been studied. Candidates would benefit from practising for the examination by using a range of resources, especially visual resources. Note, too, simple exercises identifying and annotating key evidence from resources can help to develop understanding and interpretation skills.

- **Rehearse basic skills**: stress the need for high levels of accuracy when dealing with skill based questions. Simple errors can lose marks and have the potential to impact on performance.

- **Identify and define key words**: there are a number of key words which are fundamental to the specification. Make sure that students understand these words and are comfortable with them. Examples include: economic, environmental, environmental pressures, issues/conflicts, sustainability. The use of geographical terminology is often one of the triggers for higher levels of responses.

- **Selecting examples**: look for locational examples which cover a number of aspects of the specification unit, especially when building up revision sheets.

- **Use precise revision**: break the specification down into smaller key components and build up a revision sheet on each component.

- **Look for different types of revision**: adopt a 'fit for purpose' rather than a 'one size fits all' revision strategy. For example: the use of annotated sketches to revise physical processes and landforms or the use of photographs would be helpful when revising elements of the course that have strong visual possibilities such as pressures in urban areas.

- **Examination training**: train students to adopt good practice in examinations. For example: identifying commands, marking up resources, checking all short answers at the end of the examination (they will invariably find an error or something they can add).

**Foundation Tier (40351F)**

**Section A**

**1(a)(i),(ii)** These questions presented few problems. The majority of candidates used Figure 1 effectively to answer the questions successfully.

**1(a)(iii)** Most candidates appreciated the distinction between the presentation of the temperature data (a line) and the rainfall data (bars). It was evident that a number of candidates did not use a ruler to complete the rainfall bars and a lack of accuracy lost some candidates marks.

**1(a)(iv)** The majority of candidates were able to identify the fairly constant nature of the temperature throughout the year. A number developed this theme further by using (quoting) the data or identifying minor variations across the year.

A small number of candidates appeared to be confused by the data and either described the pattern of rainfall or mixed the line and bars up, resulting in a total misunderstanding of the question.

**1(a)(v)** The majority of candidates used Figure 1 effectively to identify two natural features of the Bahia coastline that might attract visitors.

In a small number of cases it was clear that candidates did not understand the idea of 'natural characteristics', and consequently mentioned factors such as hotels and airports in their response. This was clearly inappropriate.

**1(a)(vi)** The link between the growth of tourism and economic opportunities was understood by the majority of candidates, with many answers focusing on the idea of 'jobs' and 'money'. This theme was developed further in some cases with the general idea of the multiplier and infrastructural development being brought in. At the highest level candidates fully addressed the question by suggesting how these factors might improve actual living conditions for local people.

**1(b)** There were some excellent responses to this question with many candidates bringing in appropriate case studies. Responses were often well developed with detailed observations about direct impacts from tourism (footpath erosion, destruction of coral reefs) or general points about habitat loss linked to the development of the built environment.

At the lowest level general points about 'pollution' or 'litter' were considered. Unless qualified these generic ideas were worthy only of marginal credit.

**1(c)(i),(ii)** Candidates who had clearly learned the key terminology associated with coastal processes had no problems with these questions, generally scoring full marks.

**1(c)(iii)** It was evident that a considerable number of candidates were not fully aware of the characteristics of a coastal spit and consequently failed to identify the features on Figure 2 accurately. Relatively few candidates scored more than three marks, suggesting a need for more detailed revision of this topic.

**1(c)(iv)**    Few candidates used a diagram to support their answer to this question. Responses were generally good, the majority of candidates identifying the key points of movement and deposition. In some cases there was a detailed examination of longshore drift and a very effective use of technical language. A small number of candidates used an example that they had studied, often to great effect.

**1(d)(i),(ii)**    Candidates who had clearly learned the key terminology associated with coastal engineering had no problems with these questions, generally scoring full marks.

**1(d)(iii)**    There were some excellent responses to this question with many candidates scoring three or four marks. It was clear in the majority of cases that candidates had a sound grasp of the reasons for the use of cliff drainage and groynes in the protection of coastlines.

**1(e)(i)**    Many candidates found the concept of 'managed retreat' challenging and were not able to fully explain how it works. However, in the majority of cases candidates were able to gain credit by effective descriptive use of figure 4, even if they did not fully appreciate how it worked.

    A small number of candidates used case studies to help them answer the question, often to great effect.

**1(e)(ii)**    This question was tackled very effectively with the majority of candidates identifying the possibility of a nature reserve being a clear environmental advantage of managed retreat. A considerable number of candidates developed this theme further by expressing the encouragement of 'bird watchers' or 'nature lovers'. In some cases the very idea of the development of a salt marsh as a different and rare habitat was expressed.

**Section B**

**2(a)(i),(ii),** The majority of candidates used figure 5 effectively to address these questions
**(iii),(iv)** There were a small number of minor errors on part (i) and in a very small amount of cases, the graph was not attempted.

**2(b)(i)** This question presented few problems for most candidates, most achieving full marks.

**2(b)(ii)** It was evident that few candidates had an understanding of 'natural increase' or an awareness of youthful (fertility rate) populations in less developed countries. In most cases the idea of high birth rate or lack of contraception were mentioned in vaguely generic terms.

**2(b)(iii)** Many candidates saw this question as a real challenge and failed to pick up the idea of 'economic development'. Vague references to 'jobs' and 'money' gained some credit but failed to fully address the question. Those candidates who developed this theme by expressing how cheap labour might encourage industrial development or the importance of growing urban markets often produced excellent responses. The use of an appropriate case study gave a number of candidates an excellent vehicle to base a detailed answer upon.

**2(c)(i)** The majority of candidates were able to identify the correct square for the information centre.

**2(c)(ii)** There were a number of interesting responses to this question, many of which showed a clear understanding of the idea expressed in the question and sound use of the map. Many candidates identified the rivers and the risks of flooding associated with heavy rainfall. Some developed this theme by expressing links to slope and the idea of lag time/rising rivers after storms.

The fact that building had taken place alongside the river was seen as a risk, as was the development of 'hard surfaces' in urban areas. In a small number of cases candidates suggested a lack of flood management evident on the map might add to potential risks.

Overall, a very impressive range of ideas was expressed.

**2(c)(iii)** Responses varied from simple generic ideas such as 'management plans' or 'better buildings' or 'flood warnings' to very complex discussions which were built around appropriate case studies. Where case studies were used effectively responses were often very impressive, picking up a range of ideas about preparation and planning.

A small number of candidates appeared to consider that the question had to be answered using 'flooding' and were clearly not prepared for this, often producing vague and generic responses.

**2(d)** This question presented few problems. although a lack of a ruler in some cases prevented candidates achieving the expected level of accuracy.

**2(e)(i)** A range of appropriate responses were expressed in relation to the reasons for traffic congestion in Shrewsbury. It was clear that most candidates had used the

map effectively to identify points such as: the limited number of river crossings; narrow roads; concentration of roads; high density buildings; a lack of car parks etc. When expressed effectively any of these ideas could be developed into a very effective response.

**2(e)(ii)**   This question presented few problems with the majority of candidates identifying the correct answer.

**2(e)(iii)**   Many candidates failed to use the key and identify the Park and Ride facility. Answers such as 'traffic lights' and 'roundabouts' were expressed. This was all the more surprising since a number of these candidates had got the grid square question 2(c)(i) correct and went on to use 'Park and Ride' as an example on question 2(f).

**2(f)**   There were some excellent responses to this question, many of which used well documented examples to address the question. Ideas such as 'Park and Ride', 'public transport' and 'congestion charging' were common, often expressed in considerable detail. At the lower level candidates tended to simply describe the methods while at the higher level they clearly explained how the method would reduce congestion.

**2(g)(i)**   Candidates who had clearly learned the key terminology associated with urban management had no problem with this question, often scoring full marks.

**2(g)(ii)**   Most candidates had some understanding of the idea of community, generally expressing it in relation to community facilities (schools etc). A number of candidates developed this theme by expressing ideas about community involvement or community meeting places.

**2(g)(iii)**   A number of candidates found the idea of 'sustainable settlement' challenging. In many cases the idea was expressed by identifying 'eco-friendly' elements of Sherford described in the resource, without fully exploring why these elements might be considered sustainable. Those candidates who showed some awareness of the idea of sustainability often produced thoughtful and well considered responses, using the resource to back up their points. A number of candidates brought in examples of actual or proposed 'eco-settlements', explaining how a range of management ideas can help to make settlements increasingly sustainable. Ideas about house building, recycling, the use of renewable energy, dealing with waste effectively and transport management were expressed, in some cases in considerable detail and to real effect.

**Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the **Results statistics** page of the AQA Website.