

Geography C

General Certificate of Secondary Education **GCSE 1988**

Report on the Units

June 2007

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Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the Examination.

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Chief Examiner's Report

General Comments

After a slight drop in numbers over recent years, it is very encouraging to report that numbers have grown again overall and most notably for the Higher Terminal Examination where there was an extra thousand candidates this summer. This has been matched by an improvement in quality at the top end and an increase in the percentage attaining A* for this cycle.

The Antarctica DME booklet was extremely well received and proved a good contemporary topic. Likewise the resources for the Terminal papers confirmed the contemporary flavour and have attracted much positive comment.

The importance of The Teachers' Notes to appropriate delivery of the DME preparation goes without saying. However, it was noticeable this session that many appeared to have overlooked the advice with resource 4, which subsequently led to problems with question 2 on the Higher DME paper relative to climate variation **within** Antarctica.

'Sustainability' is a fundamental concept of the DME, but are we becoming complacent about teaching it? Certainly, the questions involving it in this year's DME were less well answered compared to recent years. In addition, some Centres' candidates confused *sustainability* with *quality of life* in question A2 (e) of the Terminal paper.

Tier drift between the Foundation and Higher papers does not appear to be the issue that it was a few years ago and by far the majority of candidates appear to be appropriately entered.

The Terminal papers produced a lower mean mark this year. This was a reflection of the greater challenge posed by the wording of the part (e) questions. Before being critical of this, do appreciate that it did achieve a greater degree of differentiation, spreading the candidates and hopefully at the same time making for a more reliable award. It also highlights the need to demonstrate understanding and the application of knowledge to a given context, rather than merely writing all you know on a topic.

With Coursework (Internal Assessment), the grade thresholds have continued to stabilise. It is pleasing to report that far more Centres are utilising the generic Mark Scheme holistically and that this is leading to far fewer moderation adjustments being necessary. Well done on the crucial and much appreciated role that you play in this.

Finally, there are two administrative matters that must be repeated, one for each of the Terminal papers and both of which present unnecessary extra work for hard-pressed examiners. There continues to be a number of Centres where Foundation candidates appear to be advised to complete more than four questions, while for the Higher paper the need to indicate the numbers of the questions answered on the front sheet appears to have been completely forgotten by the majority. Before you move on, please ensure that you communicate these points to all involved in teaching GCSE Geography at your Centre.

2401/01 Decision Making Exercise (Foundation)

General Comments

In the absence of comment from Centres it would appear that they were happy with both the Resource Booklet and Examination.

The consensus of examiners was that the paper had been pitched at an appropriate level with the majority of candidates demonstrating commitment both in terms of preparation and in attempting all sections of the paper.

It was pleasing to note that, for the most part, candidates had a satisfactory understanding of the basic issues and were given the opportunity to display their geographical knowledge and skills. This is indicative of the fact that Centres had once again utilised the preparation time effectively to ensure that candidates were familiar with the issues in the Resource Booklet. The best answers came from those who had a sound understanding of the booklet and could exhibit their geographical knowledge through the questions.

It was especially pleasing to witness positive achievement from many students who have good geographical understanding but find writing skills challenging.

The quality of response was often related to Centres with effective use of the preparation period transmitting confidence to candidates and enabling them to develop their answers. This resulted in successful elaboration using the resource material and a higher level of interpretation and analysis. However, there are still a number of candidates who need to be encouraged to justify their responses with reference to the resources and not purely rely on 'lifting'. This examination requires candidates to demonstrate the ability to select evidence from the resources and then elaborate on the reasons for their choice. Candidates who find this difficult need to practise from past papers, and Centres should consider employing writing frames to extend answers and give candidates the experience of peer and self assessment to reflect on their responses. This can be facilitated by using mark schemes to establish the criteria needed to raise their mark. Many Foundation candidates find Decision Making Skills difficult to acquire and these could be practised by Centres at Key Stage 3 to increase student confidence and attainment. Past papers either at GCSE or ELC can be effectively employed in this respect.

The use of geographical terminology remains disappointing even with higher achieving candidates.

Candidates' knowledge of 'sustainability' appears not to be secure despite the focus of previous INSET. Candidates found it difficult to apply their knowledge to some aspects of this issue, which was disappointing. Too often candidates are still referring to 'pollution' without qualification.

Only a small minority of candidates employs any form of planning for their answers. This can be crucial to success in the 'decision'. Future Answer Booklets will include planning space in Question 7 and candidates need to be trained in using this effectively. There was increased evidence of the highlighting of 'command words', which were employed improves candidate focus and helps raise level of performance. Too many Centres are still solely relying on the Resource Booklet to supply all relevant information.

Comments on Individual Questions

- 1 Most candidates answered 1(a) and 1(b) well. However, it was clear that there was a lack of understanding in part (c) with many candidates challenged by the wordy nature of the resource to appreciate the impact of Antarctica on global weather systems.
- 2 Many candidates coped well with part a identifying the impacts of latitude, altitude and continentality on temperature. Part (b), however, caused some candidates to confuse changes in the ozone layer with global warming, whilst some were aware of the link between CFCs and the ozone layer but were unclear of its exact nature. Candidates had few problems with 2(c), being able to develop their responses well.
- 3
 - (a) This was generally answered well although here some wrote about 'pollution' without qualification.
 - (b) Most failed to score above four marks. For the most part they understood why Antarctica and its wildlife were important, but failed to develop their answer into one that was fully developed and linked to sustainability.

Example: 'It is important that Antarctica's wildlife is managed sustainably, so that unique animals and ecosystem do not become extinct. This is because it supports a highly specialised ecosystem.'

The above is a Level 2 answer. To get to Level 3 the Candidate would need to show clear evidence of understanding sustainability in relation to this, such as *'so that the ecosystem can be preserved for future generations / so that the ecosystem can continue undisturbed in the future.'*

- 4 The majority of candidates were able to identify correctly relevant statements in each section although some chose statements from Resource 7 and did not score any marks as the question clearly directs them instead to Resource 8.

Most however were unable to develop their answers.

Example: 'I have chosen Option C (limited environmental damage to Antarctica) as it is important to protect Antarctica from environmental damage in order that scientific investigation may continue into this unique ecosystem and the impact of climate change be recorded. This is in recognition that it is the world's last great pristine wilderness.'

This answer scored the full four marks as it has taken the statement and developed / explained its importance.

- 5 This was the best performing question where many candidates were able to demonstrate good understanding.
 - (a) *Example: 'Mining permission may be granted in the future as the world's population increases people will require more resources to support their lifestyles. Also, the rising cost of oil may increase the pressures for exploration in this area.'*
 - (b) *Example: 'This would not be a sustainable option as, if resources were found, they would only last a short period of time, the unpredictable weather would make development dangerous and human activities would increase the threat to the unique ecosystem and damage the fragile balance for ever.'*

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- 6** This question was well answered although some failed to achieve full marks as they did not develop one reason and instead writing about several. The question clearly asked for one.
- 7 (a)** The most popular choice here was Option 1, that Antarctica be conserved as a wilderness area. However, candidates did not always find it easy to justify their choice and many highlighted the disadvantages of the other options incorrectly in this section.

Example: 'If there was development then this would increase global warming and damage the ecosystem.'

An appropriate justification would be: 'no development allows this highly adapted ecosystem to survive for future generations and allows limited research programmes to be of real benefit for the future of the world. In such a cold climate any damage would take much longer to recover from and may never recover and so the last great wilderness would be lost forever.'

- (b)** Was well answered, with candidates able to highlight successfully the disadvantages of the option chosen.
- (c)** This section caused problems for many candidates as they failed to identify which option they were writing about and often lumped both together. This limited their marks to four maximum instead of the eight available to those who correctly developed answers to both named rejected options.

Candidates needed to be more specific about the option they were choosing in each section.

2401/02 Decision Making Exercise (Higher)

General Comments

This June session of the DME saw an entry of over 5600 candidates on the higher tier, of which about 500 were re-sit candidates from the January session. The vast majority, therefore, were Year Ten candidates. Most of the candidates appeared to be well prepared and to have a good grasp of the issues surrounding the future of Antarctica. It could be said, therefore, that generally candidates' performance reflected their ability and the quality of teaching, including the interpretation of the Teachers' Notes.

The paper tended to differentiate well with the most able developing their answers using the resources and their own knowledge. Weaker candidates often failed to develop their answers sufficiently, tending to give only basic points and quoting large amounts directly from the resources provided. Candidates scored well on the Decision section if they followed the question template. The candidates who did not do this penalised themselves as their answers were often muddled and failed to address all the parts of the question.

Although many candidates achieved their marks by writing concise, precise answers which focussed on the question set, there were a few who wrote responses which were not targeted sufficiently on the question. In some Centres, candidates wrote answers which were unnecessarily long. Some of these did achieve full marks eventually, but were often untidily written and grammatically poor because the candidates were writing at speed. Teachers need to emphasise to their candidates the value of short, crisp answers firmly targeted on the questions.

The background section proved not to be as straightforward as some previous DMEs. It is worth warning Centres that more challenging questions could appear anywhere in the paper and to emphasise the importance of reading each question very carefully. This session's question two was a perfect example of where candidates failed to respond to requirements of climatic differences **within** Antarctica and simply gave an overall climatic description.

Only a small number of candidates failed to finish the paper and there were virtually no rubric errors. More candidates are being encouraged to fill in the top sheet of the answer booklet correctly, including the question numbers, but there are still instances of vital information such as candidate numbers and even names being missed off scripts. Centres are once again reminded of the importance of this administration task, and also to inform candidates to leave three or four lines between each answer to enable examiners to insert the relevant level and mark. An eight-page answer booklet was issued by most Centres and was infinitely better than two or three four-page booklets, or a four-page booklet plus additional pages. Some Centres used twelve-page booklets that resulted in many unused pages which was rather unfortunate considering that the main thrust of the DME is sustainability!

Comments on Individual Questions

Section 1: the Background

- 1 This introductory question was, in the main, quite well answered but did cause a few candidates a problem. Some chose to write about Captain Scott and conditions in the early twentieth century. However, most selected temperature, wind speed, location or covered in ice as their reasons for Antarctica being an awful place and found evidence in the resource to develop their answers. Weaker candidates simply said it was very cold and isolated.

A typical full marks answer

Antarctica has been described as an awful place because of its inhospitable environment. The world's lowest temperature was recorded here of -89.2 degrees Celsius at the Vostok research station and is almost entirely covered by snow and ice. The second reason for this description is that it is extremely remote, being over 1000 kilometres from the nearest continent, South America. The continent is fifty-eight times the size of the U.K. which makes it seem daunting to any visitor.

- 2 This question proved, somewhat surprisingly, to be the most difficult for a large number of candidates. There were quite a few responses with no credit at all. The best candidates wrote convincingly about spatial variations in climate across Antarctica, supporting their answers with data from the resource pertaining to the four research stations. Others appear not to have read the question carefully enough as regards 'within Antarctica' and wrote about seasonal variations. A number stated that the climate varied as a result of distance from the sea, latitude, altitude, thickness of the ice sheet and wind speed, but failed to move on to the next stage of describing the different climates in inland and coastal locations or at different altitudes. This question thus proved a good discriminator.

A typical full marks answer

The centre of Antarctica is much colder than the coastal areas because its altitude is much higher. Vostok has an altitude of 3488 metres and an average mean temperature of -55 degrees C whereas Rothera has an altitude of only 16 metres and an average mean temperature of -5.2 degrees C. It is also much windier on the coast due to not being sheltered by the mountains. Mawson has an annual mean wind speed of 39.8 km. per hour whilst Vostok only has a mean annual speed of 18.4 km. per hour.

- 3 The standard of response between the two parts of this question tended to vary considerably. In part (a), candidates used the resources well to identify potential threats such as climate change, a thinning ozone layer and tourism. However, part (b) proved far more difficult because candidates could not develop their reasons for why the wildlife should be managed sustainably. The need for a sustainable approach to avoid damage to the unique ecosystem was not well explained.

A typical full marks answer

(a) Antarctica's wildlife is specially adapted to the conditions there and if global warming continues the habitats will be changed dramatically and this unique ecosystem may not survive in the warmer conditions and melting ice sheets. The expected increase in tourism could also cause problems for wildlife. If a ship were to leak oil, this could destroy rare habitats and take a long time to clear due to the very cold waters. Tourists could frighten the animals, disrupt the breeding season and leave dangerous rubbish behind.

(b) It is important that Antarctica's wildlife is managed sustainably so that species do not become extinct. The area is the world's largest wildlife sanctuary and has many rare breeds of penguin, bird and seal which do not exist elsewhere. If fishing was allowed to increase, the krill would need to be managed sustainably because it is so important in Antarctica's food chain and in the stability of the marine environment. Overfishing would be a disaster.

Section 2: the Options

- 4 This question appeared to discriminate well. The best candidates wrote about how the Antarctic Treaty stopped future damage to the continent. Most answers focussed on the rules and regulations that stopped military activities, banned nuclear testing, prevented the dumping of radioactive waste, outlawed territorial claims and imposed inspections on research stations, ships and aircraft. Some candidates seemed to lose the thread of the question and wrote about comments made about the Treaty itself. Some weaker candidates tended to describe global effects or how the ozone hole had been discovered over Antarctica.

A typical full marks answer

The Antarctic Treaty is vital to Antarctica because without it, some countries might start making territorial claims which could lead them to use the land as they wish and cause large scale damage to the landscape and wildlife of this remaining wilderness. The claimed land may be used for nuclear testing or radioactive waste disposal which could destroy the continent. Also, without the Treaty in place, mineral exploitation may start which would damage the environment and destroy animal habitats. This could also lead to disputes and trouble between various countries.

- 5 Most candidates used the resources well to answer this question and explained how people feel that Antarctica's possible mineral wealth and tourist potential should be exploited. The development of some answers included references to how global warming may melt the ice sheets, making mining both easier and cheaper, and boost tourism owing to people wishing to see the continent before the ice melted. Additional reasons for exploitation involved job creation, improving energy supplies and living standards and educating tourists regarding environmental protection.

A typical full marks answer

Some people feel that there should be greater exploitation of Antarctica because it is not known yet the extent of the minerals to be found in the continent. The continuously developing world has a need for these minerals to continue living the way it does at present. There is also the rising cost of these materials, so money could be made out of extracting them. Some people also think that everyone has a right to visit and explore the scenery and the wildlife and that tourist facilities should be improved to allow them to do so. This may well help to protect Antarctica in the future as people become much better informed about the area and the threats to it.

- 6 Some candidates did not score highly on this relatively straightforward question because their reasons were far too brief. Most recognised that the mining company could help solve a mineral shortage, but that the enterprise would damage the ecosystem and be a dangerous undertaking. They also realised that the tourist company could help people to respect the environment but that visitors may disrupt the breeding season. However, developing these points with reference to Chile and Argentina proved more difficult for weaker candidates. Some drew a table or made a list of bullet points with advantages and disadvantages of the options. Such strategies militated against providing the sound reasons needed for a top level response. A few candidates misunderstood the question and thought they were being asked to support or oppose each proposal, thus cutting their access to the available marks in half.

A typical full marks answer

(a) A point in favour of the mining of copper and uranium is that the world is in need of these minerals and the exploitation could increase wealth and living standards in Chile. A point against the enterprise is that both the mining and the building of the train track could have a devastating effect on the environment and could destroy many rare animal habitats by greatly increasing pollution in the area.

(b) A point in favour of building tourist facilities on Antarctica is that a lot of people want to see Antarctica and would pay lots of money to have the comfort of a hotel. This money could be used both to aid research in Antarctica and to increase wealth back in Argentina. However, the building of the resort would disturb the peace for the animals during breeding which could have a major effect on their survival. It could also create more pollution and damage future scientific research.

Section 3: the Decision

- 7 This question tended to be answered well by candidates who followed the clearly laid out structure. However, a minority wrote answers in a format of their own, often missing out at least one of the tasks. Most candidates showed a clear grasp of the concepts and issues outlined in the resource booklet. Options One, Two and Three all proved popular and Option Four was also advocated by a few candidates. Many candidates had clearly enjoyed studying the topic and had passionate views about Antarctica and its future. However, some answers were rather repetitive, especially with the rejections of options. Some candidates failed to reject each individual option, preferring a general comment on all, which cost them marks. The nature of the question did allow candidates to reveal their own knowledge and research. There was, however, some confusion over scientific research which some believed to be part of the economic development. Candidates proved in many cases that they could recognise the advantages and disadvantages of the different approaches to the future development of the continent and make a decision based on the evidence.

A typical full marks answer

I chose Option One, 'there should be no economic development at all'. I chose this option because it seems to be the best way to conserve Antarctica for future generations. It would mean preserving the pristine wilderness that exists at present. This option is the best because, as resource twelve states, "once it is developed, it will be lost forever". Also, it is unknown how numerous the various resources are. If the land is mined and very little is found, it would take a very long time for the environment to recover at such cold temperatures. The Antarctic ecosystem is unique with many rare breeds of penguin, bird and seal making up the world's largest wildlife sanctuary, and this is the only option which will fully protect this ecosystem.

I rejected Option Two because the ecosystem of the Antarctic Peninsula should be conserved along with the rest of the continent. Also the Peninsula is where the majority of the scientific research stations are and any mineral extraction or tourist activity could make it extremely difficult to get accurate information.

I rejected Option 3 because it would be dangerous for humans to develop in certain parts of Antarctica because of the unpredictable climate and difficult landscape, not to mention the isolation. If sustainable methods were required, it would be very difficult to check on these over such a vast area.

I also rejected Option 4 because unlimited development would cause the world's last great wilderness to change from pristine to polluted in a short period of time and the world would lose many different species of animal in the process.

My chosen option is not perfect. A disadvantage of allowing no economic development would be that people would become ignorant about Antarctica because no one could visit, and so care less about the dangers of global warming. This, in turn, would lead to an increase in temperatures which would melt the snow and ice, raising sea levels by up to seventy metres!

Option Two does have the advantage of allowing people to get closer to the wildlife and possibly extract some resources, but only in one area, keeping the rest of Antarctica untouched by the developers.

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Option 3's advantage would be that there will be a wider spacing out of economic development, meaning that areas like the Antarctic Peninsula would not be more affected than anywhere else and the sustainable methods would ensure that damage was kept to a minimum.

Option 4's advantage is that the world's thirst for materials such as oil, coal and gas could be quenched for decades to come because of the large deposits thought to exist in and around Antarctica.

2402 Terminal Examination (Foundation Tier)

General Comments

Most examiners and team leaders reported that the 2007 examination was at an appropriate level of difficulty for foundation candidates. Candidates who were well prepared for the examination responded well to the resources and were able to apply their geographical knowledge and understanding with clarity and confidence. Many examiners commented on marking scripts which were well above the grade C threshold, raising the issue of whether some candidates had been appropriately entered.

A few examiners felt that the 2007 examination was difficult for foundation candidates. Whilst Centre by Centre variations in performance could account for this perception, there were distinct sources of difficulty that affected candidate performance across the ability range.

Some were elements of the specification that have been assessed in previous examinations:

- A1 (e) natural landscape, human impact on physical processes
- B4 (c) possible causes of global warming
- C6 (e) inputs/outputs and location factors for a local scale economic activity

Some were areas of content being assessed for the first time.

- A1 (d) microclimate
- B5 (e) global distribution of a type of natural hazard

Teachers' Tip

Most elements of the Specification content have now been assessed in the terminal examination and this will continue. Teachers and candidates can make good use of pages 33 to 37 of the Specification to ensure that a full range of content is covered during teaching and revision. Past papers are useful in indicating the different ways that content is examined.

Case Studies

As in all previous papers effective case study recall is the key to success and the higher marks. However, remembering the factual content of case studies is only partly successful. The application of case study knowledge to the requirements of the question differentiates the most able candidates from the rest. This was most evident in the way candidates applied their Natural Hazards case studies to questions A3 (e) and B5 (e).

Teachers' Tip

Most past papers have two opportunities to apply Natural Hazards case studies, in Question B5 and a Section A question. As part of their revision candidates could try to apply a given Natural Hazard or Natural Hazard event to a range of different types of case study requirements from past papers. This could also encourage flexible thinking with the realisation that section (iii) of a case study question requires higher level responses other than factual recall.

Question Choice Grid

Again, very few candidates make genuine use of the question choice grid. It is obvious which Centres encourage candidates to do so. The grid affords candidates some valuable thinking time regarding resource interpretation and case study application. Very few candidates are unable to complete four questions in the time allocation of 2 ¼ hours. For many Foundation candidates this is an eternity to sit in the environment of the examination hall. Effective use of the grid should be seen as a less stressful way into the examination for candidates of all abilities.

Teachers' Tip

Whilst use of the question choice grid is non-mandatory, Centres should use past papers to coach candidates in using it effectively. Delegates at INSET 2006 were given a possible lesson plan which focused on completing the grid, under exam conditions in 15 minutes. Pairs and small group discussion re: question choice and case study application follow, culminating in shared success criteria for question choice as a plenary.

Rubric Error

A great deal has been written about rubric error in past examination reports. In 2007 more examiners commented on Centres where the majority of candidates commit rubric error. Most common are candidates attempting all three Section A questions followed by candidates attempting all seven questions. Examiners also noted Centres where candidates attempt all seven questions and then cross out 3 they do not wish to be marked. Whatever the reasons rubric error impairs candidate performance, gives a false impression about the difficulty of the examination (and Geography as a subject) and it holds up hard working examiners who have only three weeks to complete their marking assignment.

Teachers' Tip

Coaching candidates in the use of the question choice grid encourages them to take responsibility for following the rubric to their advantage.

Comments on Individual Questions

Section A

- 1 Surprisingly few candidates scored all 4 marks in parts (a) and (b), with identifying the A road and the camera direction proving to be most challenging. Centres can now make good use of Fig 1 and the O/S map extract to practise these skills.

The best answers for part (c) made good use of map evidence to explain the locations of water supply reservoirs and the range of attractions and facilities for tourists. Weaker answers tried to make connections between the reservoir supplying water for farming and/or forestry. Some candidates made good use of their knowledge of drainage basins to explain how forestry is used to manage upland catchment areas.

In part (d), candidates who did not understand the word 'microclimate' were limited to describing the physical and human features in and around Carr Bottom and Derwent Moors and were unable to score marks. Candidates familiar with the term were able to explain how altitude affects temperatures and rainfall. A few candidates made good use of the map to explain the influence of aspect and shelter on wind strength.

Coastal landscapes were the most successful case studies for part (e). Candidates were able to describe coastal landforms, sometimes with names and account for how coastal management schemes affect the processes of erosion and deposition. Some of these Candidates fell short of a full 9 marks by simply listing landform types rather than describing them. The Holderness Coast proved to be the most common location. Other Candidates scored marks by describing National Park landscapes and explaining how tourism affected rates of erosion. Dovedale in the Peak District was such an example.

A disappointingly large number of candidates did not score any marks as they did not understand the term 'natural landscape' and/or know an example.

- 2** This was a popular and well answered question. Most candidates correctly read the development data on Fig 2 to score all 4 marks in (a) and (b).

Part (c) was well answered by either defining the measure and/or explaining how it provided evidence of a country's level of development. Many candidates were able to do both. Life Expectancy was the best explained, followed by Adult Literacy Rate. Only a few candidates showed a good understanding of GDP per capita.

Part (d) yielded some outstanding responses and again proved the effectiveness of cartoons in illuminating complex issues. The most common explanations focused on how loans and interest create LEDC debt. Many picked up that support for large projects could be at the expense of smaller, more needy or sustainable projects. Some candidates were credited for applying their own knowledge of how aid can create dependency and undercut local businesses, as in the 2005 examination cartoons. Some candidates did not score marks as they misinterpreted aid for Aids.

Part (e) gave many candidates the opportunity to apply a well learned development case study. Most common were African Goat projects in a range of countries, self help housing schemes in Brazilian favelas and the Grand Carajas Scheme.

Inevitably, weaker candidates wrote about aid charities and/or tried to use Fig 2 and Fig 3 to generate relevant ideas. A significant number of candidates limited their mark to level 1 by giving Africa as their named LEDC.

- 3** Many candidates rose to the challenge of Fig 4 and by careful analysis of the image and key were able to score 4 marks for parts (a) and (b). Common errors in (a) were failing to notice Seattle in the North West corner of the image. In part (b) many candidates selected the largest urban areas they could see rather than noticing the obvious underlining on the key to indicate the 'fastest growing'. This gave candidates a choice of any two from fifteen on the image.

In part (c), some candidates did not notice that the phrase followed 'around the edges' was followed by 'of the urban areas'. This led to some irrelevant answers

Part (d) was fairly straightforward with lack of choice, hazard perception and being part of a community being given as reasons for living in hurricane risk areas of the south coast of the USA. Some candidates used their knowledge of Hurricane Katrina to develop their answers.

The Mt St Helens volcano, the Kobe and San Francisco earthquakes and Hurricane Katrina were the most common valid examples for part (e). Some responses included credible data in part (ii). Hazard prediction and protection were the most common features of part (iii) although many candidates did not understand how a natural hazard could be affected by human activities.

Section B

- 4 This was a resource rich question which helped some candidates to score high marks and which proved popular for the traditionally neglected Section B question.

Most candidates were able to use Fig 5 and Fig 6 to score 4 marks for parts (a) and (b).

The labelled diagram for part (c) yielded a wide range of responses. Many candidates did not attempt the task. Weaker answers saw sketches of greenhouse gas sources as per Fig 6 and or incorrect ideas about the depletion of the ozone layer. Relatively few candidates were able to show the impact of greenhouses gases on the balance of ongoing long wave, infra red radiation.

By contrast, (d) was well answered with selection of correct ideas and relevant development allowing even the weakest candidates to score the full 6 marks.

A large number of candidates continued to write about global warming as a climate type in part (e). Others wrote vague, non-scoring responses about weather conditions or crude climate features such as 'hot' or 'wet'. Most credible examples were tropical climates. However many of these answers focused on the links between climate and rainforest vegetation rather than climatic features and factors.

- 5 Most candidates were able to read the simplified text in Fig 8 to score 4 marks for parts (a) and (b).

Good use was made of Fig 9 to explain how the drought in Spain could affect domestic water use, tourism, recreation and personal hygiene.

Part (d) yielded many good responses as candidates were able to link the two resources and consider why LEDC droughts have more serious consequences.

Dehydration and health problems followed by impact on crops and starvation were the most common answers. Some candidates gave a clear LEDC overview by focusing on inadequate access to clean safe water exacerbated by the onset of drought conditions.

Part (e) was an unsuccessful attempt to set a different type of natural hazards case study question. Most candidates did not read or understand the term 'global distribution.' They then proceeded to give a descriptive account of their known event/place based case study to score no marks. Some candidates scored Level 1 marks for giving valid location factors for individual hazard events, mostly floods.

However they were local and not global in scale. Earthquakes and plate tectonics provided the basis for the most successful answers, with some candidates showing their knowledge of different types of plate margin and movement to generate strong earthquakes. Less successful were those who tried to explain the links between volcanoes and plate margins.

Section C

- 6 This question proved even more unpopular with candidates than in previous years.

Performance for parts (a) and (b) was inconsistent. Some candidates scored 4 marks because they understood the term economic activity and they studied the map and key. Shops, advertising and transport/taxis were the most common responses for (a). Some candidates gave Sri Lanka as their answer to (b) (i) by misinterpreting the 7 on the number key as the total of call centres.

Lower labour costs, land prices and setting up costs were the main, valid reasons given in part (c). Job/wealth creation and low wages/exploitation of workers were the main points given in part (d). Some candidates also commented on the vulnerability of LEDCs to the re-location or closure of MNC/TNCs. Some candidates misinterpreted the question and continued their train of thought from part (c) to explain the good and bad points of investing in LEDCs for MNC/TNCs.

Most responses to part (e) lacked convincing depth or detail. Weaker candidates showed ignorance of the key terms 'inputs/outputs' and 'location'. Most candidates appeared to take their cue from the such as suggestions in the questions and wrote vague ideas about a local supermarket rather than a learned case study. Other weak answers were focused on farms and factories with general ideas.

- 7 By contrast, this question was very popular and well answered, often being the highest scoring question for weaker candidates.

Most candidates were able to read the line graph Fig 12 to score 3 marks for part (a) and (b) (i). Part (b) (ii) proved more challenging with some candidates leaving a trail of numbers to show their working out. Some miscalculated their answer whilst others only gave the % for Japan in the year 2020.

In part (c), candidates were able to give and explain valid factors. Improvements in health care and standard of living were the most common.

There was some confusion in responses to part (d) where candidates incorrectly equated increasing numbers of over 65s with rising birth rates. But many candidates wrote credible answers based around increased demands for health care and pension support with an increasing burden upon the younger, working population to provide the revenue.

Part (e) gave a range of interesting, valid responses. Most common were migration from Mexico to the USA and Poland to the U.K. There were also good rural-urban answers set in Brazil and Kenya and some recognising British emigration to Spain and Australia. A few candidates gave very contemporary accounts of migration caused by the current conflict in Darfur. Candidates who gave valid push/pull factors and relevant effects without clear places were limited to a maximum of 5 marks.

The impact on housing and the labour market were the most common ideas in part (iii), valid ideas now in parts of the U.K. Interestingly, many candidates commented on migration fuelling racism and resentment in some places.

2403 Terminal Examination (Higher Tier)

General Comments

Comments suggest that this year's paper was again considered appropriate and accessible for candidates, yet with a challenge in the part (e) questions that has led to greater differentiation. The use of contemporary issues and events has been welcomed by most, as have the varied resources. Certainly the Paper has allowed much positive achievement and few candidates are now attaining less than half marks, are misentered or unable to write at length, whilst at the top end there are some truly magnificent answers. At the same time it is clear that candidates at some Centres are 'caught out' by one or two questions, overlooking the requirement for the whole Specification to be visited over a five/six year period.

There remain many examples of good practice:

- (a) Excellent data and resource interpretation;
- (b) Outstanding and perceptive interpretation of cartoons;
- (c) Improved use of maps and images;
- (d) A significant increase in the use of annotated diagrams and sketch maps, many unprompted;
- (e) A very pleasing improvement in the adhering to command words and use of geographical terms.

Many candidates reach very high standards and write fluently and to the point. Clearly there is some excellent and effective teaching of Geography taking place. Yet, as always, there remain areas for improvement that would help to close the gap between the best and the rest.

Teachers' Tips

How many of the **general points** below would help your candidates improve their level of attainment?

- (a) **Produce shorter, snappier answers:** for some Centres it was much better this year, but a significant number of candidates still write far too much, especially for the two mark sections. Consider that for A1(b) about weather differences, all that was needed was 'wetter' and 'colder', plus the appropriate locations – nothing more.
- (b) **Write a paragraph per answer:** when your candidates are asked for two causes, effects, etc. do you insist upon two paragraphs? Most part (c) and (d) questions follow this format and it helps the examiner immeasurably to see a clearly laid out answer. Surely it helps the candidate too? A structured answer for part (e) should similarly involve a new paragraph per point/example.
- (c) **Target the precise wording of the questions better:** what is wanted? This is a matter of first resisting the temptation to regurgitate all you know about a chosen case study and then targeting exactly what is being asked. In each of A1, A3 and B5 part (e) questions, much was written that was irrelevant to the question set.
- (d) **Less generalisations and stereotyping:** were your candidates amongst those that produced generic answers to C7(e) on international migration? Were their push and pull factors specific to a place? Are their statements about Africa sweeping and, often, quite blatantly inaccurate because of the stereotyping?

- (e) **Know the definitions better:** in recent years these have been both explicitly and implicitly required. This year it was necessary to be able to define tertiary industry (C6), and know what is an ecosystem (B4) and global trade (A2), to give but three examples, yet many were found wanting.
- (f) **Know what is in the Specification:** 'all' the content has to be examined at some stage or another. Are there topics that you do not teach and is this justified?
- (g) **Improve case study, specific detail:** left to last because it is a perennial inclusion. More than anything, this remains the main discriminator between the best and those who do not quite doing themselves justice. Remember that this can be place (especially Section A) and thematic specific detail (especially Sections B & C).

More **specific points** that might help?

Ozone layer: nothing to do with Global Warming – yet so many candidates think it is.

Pattern: caused problems as to what constitutes a 'pattern' for some (A3b).

The role of humans in Physical Geography: this year two parts of questions (A1 and A3 (e)) required explanation of the impact or role of humans within physical environments and many could not offer a suitable answer. Can we teach it more clearly?

This year four questions proved distinctly more popular than the others, QA2, QA3, QB5 and QC7. Economic Activities continues to prove distinctly less popular than Population & Settlement, but Physical Systems reached a new peak as its resurgence continues against the all-conquering Natural Hazards – yet many candidates continue to score very well for both QB4 and QC6.

Comments on Individual Questions

Section A

- 1 This question based upon the Peak District National Park map and photograph was the least popular Section A question, but was generally fairly well done. Part (a), however, led to a significant number mistakenly identifying the reservoir as Ladybower, rather than Derwent.
 - (b) & (c) produced some good answers about microclimate, although a surprising number inappropriately referred to flooding as an element of the weather. Many could have produced much shorter answers for (b) with the same outcome.
 - (d) revealed some excellent use of map reading skills and knowledge of location.
 - (e) A challenging question with most using coastal studies, providing some excellent detail and sketch maps for Holderness, in particular. However, in many cases it was clear that candidates possessed the detailed knowledge, but were not applying it carefully enough to the question about the impact of human activity upon the physical processes. Some gave lengthy accounts on the latter before (or without) referring to the former, for which there could be little credit.

- 2 A popular choice of question, based upon development in LEDCs and in particular southern Africa, with most answering well.
- (a) & (b) were well answered, save some wanting to use the death rate and unemployment to measure development.
 - (c) produced some excellent and inventive responses, once candidates went beyond merely repeating the labels from the cartoon. However, despite fairtrade clearly being well taught in many Centres
 - (d) differentiated considerably, with many confusing aid with trade.
 - (e) There were some excellent answers from a whole range of projects, including those for Liana, Carajas, Goat, Pergau Dam and Alta Floresta. Those struggling for a good example tended to choose a more generalised project, without a specific location (such as Oxfam in general) or talking about a whole country (usually Bangladesh) and so found marks harder to come by. Generally, quality of life was better dealt with than in previous years, with far more discussing education and health, as well as money!
- 3 The most popular question in section A for many Centres. The USA satellite image was well understood by many candidates and knowledge of the USA, although not required, was well used by many. In (a), some displayed excellent use of terms such as nucleated and dispersion.

The word *distribution* was understood by most but did lead to some confusing answers in (c) for those who overlooked physical factors. For (d), most gave some excellent and perceptive answers, yet there remains the misconception amongst some that salt water is a good water supply!

- (e) was often not as well answered as many previous hazard questions, despite a similar question having appeared within an LEDC context in 2003. Kobe remains universally popular, but still many candidates cannot resist the temptation to regurgitate all they know rather than focusing upon the precise question set. Human preparation for earthquakes was an acceptable answer, as was the impact of human error. The key for marks to be credited was that a human needed to have made the decision that had an impact upon the hazard event.

Section B

- 4 This question about global warming proved a more popular Physical Environments one than in previous years and especially so in certain Centres. A few ignored the fact that 'type' was in bold in (a), but (b) presented few problems.

The diagram required for part (c) was on the whole well known, but often without stress on the role of greenhouse gases. There is still considerable confusion regarding the ozone layer. Many incorrectly think that it is holes in this layer letting in more heat, or at least that it must be mentioned in any discussion of global warming.

- (d) The cartoon about global warming produced excellent results, focusing upon the role of humans and that there was 'no exit' from it all. However, a few ignored the request to not talk about specific causes.

(e) The tropical rainforest was by far the most popular choice and led to some outstanding answers, both with unprompted diagrams and excellent specific detail of drip tips, buttress roots and the like. This question produced more full Level 3 answers than any other. However, at the other end of the scale, there were some who simply failed to access the question in trying to use the BedZED 'eco-village' example from the DME.

5 It was the turn of drought for the Natural Hazard question this year, based upon the recent droughts in West Africa and Spain. Still the most popular Section B question for most Centres, it did not, however, produce the best answers. Part (a) was straightforward, but in (b) there was some confusion about primary and secondary effects.

(c) & (d) produced relatively few problems, although in the latter there were some long-winded answers as candidates insisted upon discussing the two areas separately.

(e) Strong candidates took this question in their stride, producing excellent answers usually based upon plate tectonics or tropical storms. However, for many it presented them with considerable difficulties and many candidates reverted to writing as much as they could about a single event, making no reference to global distribution. For this reason, many answers did not get out of Level 1. Answers involving global effects and aid were accepted.

Section C

6 This question based upon Indian call centres was the least popular on the paper and in some Centres was not attempted by any candidates. Most answers scored well. Many struggled to properly define tertiary industry, but otherwise the first four parts proved particularly accessible, with knowledge of the role of multinationals in global economic growth being good.

(e) Those that understood the term 'systems diagram' scored highly and there were only occasional answers that did not score well into Level 2. Vine House Farm in Lincolnshire was the most used example, but a complete variety were successfully utilised, with some pleasing specific detail employed by many.

7 This question based upon ageing population was the most popular question on the paper. (a) presented few with problems, but (b) showed that some candidates still do not understand population structure.

The cartoon encouraged some very thoughtful responses many of which showed a clear understanding of the issues involved in MEDC ageing populations.

(e) The international migration question featured USA and Mexico in most cases, answered with varying degrees of success. Whilst most managed six marks for this section, many answers were generic and could have been for almost 'any migration', lacking as they did place knowledge. It was good to see the use of contemporary studies of Polish migration to the UK by a considerable number, but not so some of the perceived, unsubstantiated, negative effects of international migration.

2404 Coursework

General Comments

The vast majority of Centres continue to devise excellent investigations using key questions. Their candidates carried out a wide range of fieldwork which obviously interested and motivated them. There was also an increase in the use of ICT, which was used extensively, and in particular the effective annotation of digital photographs. In addition, there was an improvement in the number of candidates who substantiated their conclusions and effectively evaluated their investigation.

It was encouraging to see a significant number of Centres send their MS1 sheets in advance of the May 10th deadline which helped Moderators manage their time. The vast majority of Centres applied the assessment criteria precisely and in a holistic manner.

Overall, standards remain high and there was evidence of Centres using their Specification Advisor and INSET to improve the nature of their investigations and their application of assessment criteria. Teachers and candidates deserve much credit for producing such high quality investigations.

**General Certificate of Secondary Education
Geography(1988)
June 2007 Assessment Series**

Unit Threshold Marks

Unit		Maximum Mark	a*	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	u
2401F	Raw	60	-	-	-	44	37	30	23	16	0
	UMS	83	-	-	-	72	60	48	36	24	0
2401H	Raw	60	52	46	40	34	25	-	-	-	0
	UMS	120	108	96	84	72	60	-	-	-	0
2402	Raw	100	-	-	-	66	58	50	42	34	0
	UMS	139	-	-	-	120	100	80	60	40	0
2403	Raw	100	79	70	61	52	40	-	-	-	0
	UMS	200	180	160	140	120	100	-	-	-	0
2404	Raw	40	35	31	27	24	19	15	11	7	0
	UMS	80	72	64	56	48	40	32	24	16	0

Specification Aggregation Results

Overall threshold marks in UMS (ie after conversion of raw marks to uniform marks)

	Maximum Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
1988F	279	-	-	-	240	200	160	120	80	0
1988H	400	360	320	280	240	200	-	-	-	0
Overall	400	360	320	280	240	200	160	120	80	0

The cumulative percentage of candidates awarded each grade was as follows:

	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U	Total No. of Cands
1988F	-	-	-	28.0	53.7	73.3	87.2	95.8	100	8178
1988H	15.7	44.1	73.8	93.1	98.4	99.4	-	-	100	14842
Overall	10.1	28.5	47.6	69.9	82.5	90.2	95.0	98.1	100	23020

23020 candidates were entered for aggregation this series

For a description of how UMS marks are calculated see;
http://www.ocr.org.uk/exam_system/understand_ums.html

Statistics are correct at the time of publication

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