GCSE

Geography C

General Certificate of Secondary Education **1988**

Report on the Units

June 2008

CONTENTS

GCSE Geography C (1988)

REPORT ON THE UNITS

Chief Examiner's Report

General Comments

Another cycle of the Bristol Project (GCSE Geography C) has been successfully completed and, hopefully, your results will have matched your expectations. The current GCSE Specifications are coming towards their end. The GCSE cohort you commence teaching in September 2008 will be the last of the current Specification, with the final units examined in June 2010. If you have not already thought about the new GCSEs, you are reminded that teaching of them will commence in September 2009 and that specifications and INSET are already available.

Many Centres were caught out by the inclusion of a Resource Sheet with the Higher Terminal paper; some not having treasury tags available and others attaching it even when that question had not been attempted. As ever, the request to fill in the numbers of the questions attempted was ignored by many, but thank you to those Centres who have heeded the special request made in recent reports to do so.

The following specific points have also been highlighted this session:

- Across all papers it is very encouraging to see relatively few candidates receiving low marks. There exists good access to the papers, whilst they continue to differentiate well.

- By far the majority of candidates are being entered for the correct tier of examination. However, there remains evidence that a few, who do not have the language skills to develop their answers sufficiently, are being entered for the Higher Tiers. Perhaps they would be more successful via the Foundation route?

- The ability of candidates to cope with the varied skills required of a Geographer is very encouraging. Cartograms, cross-sections, circular graphs and latitude & longitude did not phase most, although one or two Centres would benefit from exposing their candidates to these a little better.

- Candidates are encouraged (and reminded) to use 'own knowledge' more for the DME and local examples across all the assessment modules.

- The standard of work for the Internal Assessment has improved and more candidates are accessing the higher levels. This is especially the case at the top of the range where they have used ICT effectively and have substantiated their conclusions and given comprehensive evaluations. This is encouraging, as teachers have taken note of the advice given them, especially at the most recent INSET sessions.

Teachers are reminded that all marked Internal Assessment must show annotation and where the levels have been awarded.

2401/01 Decision Making Exercise (Foundation)

General Comments

The Examiners reported that the examination paper was appropriate for the ability range. Many candidates performed well, displaying a good understanding of the issues explored in the resource booklet. These candidates employed sound geographical knowledge and skills in their answers. They exhibited familiarity with the information in the resource booklet, implying that the preparation time had been a positive learning experience.

Although more candidates now have a better understanding of the definition of sustainability, they still find it difficult to apply it well in the context of individual questions. This is an area teachers should continue to target. Memorised definitions are all very well but candidates need to understand the concepts and be able to apply them.

The performance of some weak candidates is characterised by often extensive copying from the resource booklet, without any qualification or reference to the question being answered. Whilst this may get them some marks, it is an area that teachers should target in future to raise levels of attainment. One strategy could be to re-visit 'writing frameworks' and develop strategies for starting an answer that will avoid a straight 'lift' from a resource. Pair or group work could involve them explaining in their words what they believe to be the most important points in a resource; this is also a good way of demonstrating understanding. Much of what many weak candidates wrote gained marks for 'nuggets' of relevance buried within much that was irrelevant. Teachers are reminded that written communication is assessed as part of levels marking:

Level 1 Written communication is in the form of everyday spoken language

Level 2 Adequate written communication

Level 3 Accurate written communication with some use of specialist terms.

There was some pleasing evidence of candidates planning their answers for Section Three. This was carried out on the lined pages at the back of the answer booklet. A number of candidates used simple tables of advantages and disadvantages. Others used mind maps and spider diagrams.

It was noted that some candidates are underlining 'command words' and 'key words' now that the Joint Council for Qualifications 'Instructions for Conducting Examinations' bans the use of highlighters in examinations. Pale coloured gel pens are also banned. The instructions for the invigilators announcement at the beginning of an examination also state that candidates must write only in black ink or ballpoint pen. This would appear to explain why some candidates seem to have used a double pointed pen! Invigilators appear to have made them go over answers, written using a blue pen, with a black pen once the 'wrong pen' had been observed.

A number of examiners believe, additionally, that the quality of handwriting is deteriorating. They reported difficulties in reading both pale spidery writing and extremely scruffy writing. If a candidate has genuine problems with writing it may well be worth investigating eligibility for access arrangements.

2. Comments on Individual Questions

1   (a)   A surprising number of candidates got the total forest area in Europe wrong, mostly by leaving the answer as 156 – omitting the million.

1   (b)   Many candidates wrote rainforest as the main type of forest in tropical areas without adding tropical or monsoon. Some wrote coniferous as the answer.

Reference to the factors explaining this: climate or weather, soils, slope, drainage or growing conditions was good.

1   (c)   Most candidates correctly stated two ways that humans use forests from Resource 2, although some gave jobs as one use.

1   (d)   Some candidates confused renewable with re-useable and recyclable. There was also some confusion between rain forests and other forests. Most understood aspects of the problem; woodland not being replanted leading to lack of supplies of wood, the removal of habitats leading to a reduction in variety of species, a lack of forest resources for the future. Although some didn't link their answer to sustainability, others made reference to the term and explained it well by referring to a number of ideas. A few wrote at length about global warming and climate change.

*An **exemplar answer***

This is a problem because if wood is not replanted it can cause flooding in areas where trees have been cut down. The land then loses all its nutrients because they are washed away by the rain. Silt causes the rivers to be blocked up. Without trees there is no wood to use and more carbon in the atmosphere, as the trees normally take carbon out of the atmosphere during photosynthesis. This increases greenhouses gases and global warming, and causes the climate to change.

2   (a)   Most candidates stated two reasons for clearing the rainforest such as road building, mining, logging, settlers moving in, farming, ranching/grazing land, HEP stations. Some candidates just repeated answers to 1(c).

2   (b)   Describing one problem for the native people caused by clearing the rainforest was usually done well. Problems included disease, death, loss of animal habitat, loss land, migration to other areas, flooding, change of lifestyle, loss of culture and traditional way of life, change in climate/ microclimate.

*An **exemplar answer***

One problem caused for natives is the introduction of diseases by the settlers which results in fatal epidemics.

2   (c)   As with 2(b), this question describing one problem clearing the rainforest creates for the settlers was well answered. Problems included falling crop yields, loss of soil fertility, soil exhaustion and the need to move on to clear new land, lack of fodder for cattle, growth of weeds, changes in climate/ microclimate.

*An **exemplar answer***

Commonly crop yields fall resulting in settlers abandoning their plots then they have to relocate and clear more land.

3   This question about how rainforest destruction can affect global climates was usually well explained and scored highly. Although some candidates copied extensively from the resource, there was also some good understanding of the issues.

An exemplar answer

When rainforest trees are cut down and burned, carbon dioxide is emitted into the atmosphere because 50% of a tree is carbon. The increase of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere stops the heat of the earth escaping (the greenhouse effect) and so warms up the whole planet. The rainforest trees take water from precipitation and release water vapour back into the atmosphere as part of the water cycle. If the trees are cut down there is no transpiration of water vapour, so condensation cannot happen meaning less rainfall.

4   Candidates found this question about the importance of developing forests in a sustainable way difficult. Few gained top level marks for describing and explaining how the two schemes in Resource 6, The Forestry Stewardship Council and Midishi Village in Somalia, develop forests sustainably. There was extensive copying of the bullet points for Scheme 1, few candidates appearing to understand the nature of FSC and what it actually does. There was extensive 'lifting' of paragraphs for Scheme 2. Those who linked the schemes to the sustainability recommendations in Resource 5 fared better, but sometimes the use of this resource was taken out of context.

An exemplar answer

Scheme 1: Forestry Stewardship Council
The FSC involves local people in decisions about their forests. The FSC monitor the rate of forest clearance so that they can maintain the amount of trees in the forests and the amount that are felled. So there is never more trees being felled then planted. The FSC educates communities so forests are not lost forever.

Scheme 2: Midishi village in Somalia
Action Aid helps the villagers to set up a tree nursery by giving them seeds or young trees. The villagers watered the little trees in the nursery and then moved them to the land around the village. Once the trees have matured the fruit on them, peaches and guavas, can be sold. This provides an income for the local people in the village. It gives them a local economy.

5   This question about methods of managing forests in the future was generally well answered. Very few candidates failed to achieve any marks, although 5(a) about methods of damaging the forest was slightly better answered than 5(b). For 5(a) continuous cropping and livestock grazing were the most popular answers, and for 5(b) agroforestry and nature conservation. Re-forestation, selective logging and clear felling were acceptable for (a) or (b) with appropriate justification.

An exemplar answer

5a
Method   *Continuous Cropping*
Explanation   *This will cause total deforestation. The land is cleared to grow crops with chemical fertilisers. The forest will not grow back.*

    5b
    Method   *Nature Conservation*
    Explanation   *This means large areas of the forest will be protected and nature left to take its course. It will also attract animals and be sustainable for the environment.*

6   In 6(a), many repeated answers to 2(a) and did not focus on ways that Britain's woodlands are under threat. Consequently there was much written about native people and hunting instead of crop farming, animal grazing, property development, fuel, conifer planting and issues related to planning laws and farmland.

      6(b) was the most frequent 'no response' question. Some of those who managed to identify a suitable conflict in the aims of The UK Forestry Commission listed in Resource 9(a) were then able to go on and develop their answer. Others could identify a conflict but found it more difficult to explain what it meant. A number failed to appreciate that they had to identify a conflict and simply wrote about one of the aims. Many aims did not seem well understood. A significant number of candidates seemed not to understand the question at all and chose to write about farming.

      An exemplar answer

    Conflict   *To develop forests for the production of wood and*
                                To protect and enhance the environment

    Explanation   *The Forestry Commission wants money for wood, which means they will cut down forests. They also protect and enhance the environment which means making sure that every tree is kept alive, sustainable and environmentally friendly. So they want to cut down trees and keep trees in the environment, which isn't easy.*

7   A number of candidates' answers to this question indicated difficulties with some of the ideas and terminology used in the resources. There was confusion about the location of Wentwood Forest. A number of candidates appeared to be under the impression the woodland was rainforest inhabited by native people. Others understood that Wentwood was a British forest but were unsure whether it was ancient or native woodland. Then there was uncertainty about the implications of a tree being ancient, native, non-native, foreign or a conifer.

      Some seemed to ignore the resources and developed most of their arguments from the descriptions of each option on page eight of the question paper, making little reference to Resources 10 and 11 and the rest of the Resource Booklet. Only the very best candidates used the resources more widely.

      Many answers about Options 2 and 3 focused on 'using woods for recreation' or 'not allowing public access'.

      Option 1 was rarely chosen in (a) but 'quick profit' and references to 'money' were often the mainstay of the answers.

      In 7(a) the most popular choice was Option 2, all conifers and non-native trees should be replaced by planted native woodlands, to be used for recreational purposes. Option 3, the area should be restored as closely as possible to its former glory as ancient woodland, the public should not be allowed access, was also well argued. A minority of candidates made a case for Option 1, the area should be planted with conifers that can be sold for a quick profit.

There were some good ideas among the reasons given although few candidates mentioned sustainability. Those who did well in (a) tended to also do well in (b) and (c).

Exemplar answers

Option 2
It will be keeping native trees and that will be good for animals and the environment. Also if it is used for recreation you can teach people about the importance of forests and get families involved in physical activities like 'go ape', cycling and orienteering. Money will be made and this can buy research on how to make the forest more sustainable. It will give the public a chance to get involved with nature. If you charge for parking, recreational activities etc. a profit can be made.

Option 3
Ancient woodland is a link with the wooded landscape that covered the country after the Ice Age. So if we don't restore this ancient forest we will be losing a bit of history as there is hardly any left. Also the UK is one of the least wooded places in Europe so we should do something about that. Our ancient woodland is a rich wildlife habitat so restoring Wentwood Forest will secure the future of many endangered species. Rebuilding the forest means plants and animals will be protected.

Option 1
Conifers are quick growing so if they are replanted with seedlings of commercial timber for reforestation there will always be a woodland area for felling and replanting. People will still be able to access this forest and conifers have been in Wentwood since 1880, they are not a new thing. Also Scots Pine is native not foreign. Conifers are evergreen and provide food and shelter for birds like goshawk and firecrests. There are also insects in the trees and red squirrels. Conifers are not so bad.

7(b) was well answered with most candidates able to give disadvantages of the option chosen in (a).

Option 2
It does not give resources for any timber production. The animals may be disturbed by people using the forest for walking. Noisy recreation like go ape could frighten the animals so they do not breed. Plants could get trampled.

Option 3
By closing this part of the forest and not letting people have access we are losing a part of history as people who regularly visit will be banned. They may be angry and oppose the idea because they won't be able to visit to see it back to its glory days and the natural beauty of the trees and wildlife.

Option1
The woodland would look a bit boring if every tree was the same conifer like lots of Christmas trees in rows. It is very dark in conifer woodland, no sun. Green plants cannot grow in shade or dry soil that's full of needles.

7(c) as in previous sessions many candidates failed to identify which option they were writing about and often put the reasons for rejecting the other two options together for the examiner to sort out. This perhaps indicates that, with time nearly up, they are tired or rushing to finish. Just a little more attention to detail would have gained many candidates a couple more marks. There were some very simplistic statements, the option was 'not a good idea', 'I didn't like this option so I did not choose it' and references to 'time', 'profit' and 'money'. All could have gained marks with exemplification.

Option 3
This does not teach people about the importance of forests because they are not allowed to use it. They cannot see the animals, birds and plants that live there. It will not produce money for the economy, or wood that could be used as a resource. It won't benefit the timber industry. It won't attract tourists.

Option 2
Replacing the conifers and non native trees will take a long time because the native trees will take a much longer time to grow to their full size. We could lose the forest altogether after the seedlings are planted. The ground where the big trees were could get too dry so the seedlings die or it could be flooded so they float away. Recreational activities could also cause damage, especially to the new trees and plants.

Option 1
If the area was planted with fast growing conifers they would slowly damage any chance of trying to restore ancient and native woodland. It is not sustainable. The conifers would create a canopy that will stop sunlight and water reaching the native plants in the soil, which would eventually kill them. Animals would not survive. People would not like to see an environment being destroyed for a quick profit.

The exemplar answers reveal that much good work was seen. Although there were very few candidates who did not answer question seven, some had very weak Decision Making Skills and wrote naïve or simplistic answers. Strategies involving writing frameworks and group decision making should be developed to improve performance.

2401/02 Decision Making Exercise (Higher)

Overall Performance of the Candidates

The June 2008 session of the DME saw approximately 5 600 candidates for the higher tier paper, which is about one third of the January entry. Of these candidates, about 500 were re-sit entries following the January session on the growth of airports. The issue of forests was generally well received and many centres, realising what the topic was to be a few years ago, had done some background work on topics like the rain forest either in Key Stage Three programmes of study or as part of the specification coverage at GCSE level. Hence most of the candidates were well prepared and seemed at ease with the questions, reflecting both their own geographical ability and the quality of teaching. The interpretation of the Teachers' Notes can be particularly useful to colleagues either new to the Specification or new to the teaching profession.

Once again the paper tended to differentiate well in most areas with the better candidates developing their answers using the resources provided and in some cases their own knowledge of the rain forests or local woodlands. Weaker candidates do not develop their answers sufficiently, giving only basic points often as a list or copying large sections directly from the resources without applying it to the question asked. Candidates tended to score well on the Decision section of the paper if they followed the provided structure of the question. Some weaker candidates simply gave the advantages and disadvantages of all four options.

In general, responses tended to be more concise than in some previous sessions and this is to be applauded. However, as usual, some candidates wrote far too much on questions one and two and thus either failed to finish the paper or had to leave out question six completely.

The improvements noted in terms of centre administration in the January 2008 session have continued with centres using mainly eight page answer booklets, getting candidates to correctly fill in the front covers and encouraging them to leave a few lines between each answer. However, it should be noted by centres that there is clear evidence of candidates being entered for the higher tier who would have been far better suited to the foundation tier, not only for their geographical ability but also for their level of literacy. This was particularly noticeable in questions three and six.

Comments on Individual Questions

Section 1: The Background

Question 1

Use Resource 2.

Describe and explain two reasons why so many forests have disappeared from our planet in recent years.

This question was generally answered well with most candidates understanding the need to select one idea and develop it using detail from the resource. Some weaker candidates simply wrote a list of the uses of forests from the resource with no explanation. The best answers developed timber by stating its many uses in such things as building or explained how the need for more food has seen forests cleared for ranching. Using medicines as a reason for large scale forest clearance was inaccurate.

A typical full marks answer:

So many forests have disappeared from our planet in recent years for many different reasons. Forests around the world are continually used for timber. The wood is used in building houses for increasing populations and for making furniture for people in richer countries. Furthermore, forests are also used for fuel in many parts of the world as the price of fossil fuels increases and their supply begins to run out. Wood should be a renewable resource, but due to a lack of replanting and an increasing demand for it to be burnt for power, forests are disappearing rapidly from our planet.

Question 2

Use Resources 3 and 4.

Identify and explain two reasons why it is vital that the Earth's rainforests are protected from destruction.

This question was also generally answered well with the resources providing information on climate change and damage to the Earth's hydrological cycle which were most commonly and effectively used. The loss of indigenous homes and valuable resources from the forest were also used. Quite often too much detail regarding climate change and the reduction in rainfall was given and answers became too long and rather muddled.

A typical full marks answer:

It is vital that the Earth's rainforests are protected from destruction because without them climate change may occur. 40% less rainfall may fall because farmland, grassland and scrub forest store less water to release into the atmosphere than forest and this will cause drought and more deserts in some parts of the world. Also, cutting down the rainforests will result in more carbon dioxide in the air and less trees to give out oxygen, resulting in an increase in global warming.

Question 3

Use Resources 4 and 5 plus your own knowledge.

Explain why it is important that the recommendations from the World Commission on Forests and Sustainable Development are closely followed for the sake of;
(a) the native forest communities

(b) the world's weather systems

This question provided an unexpected source of difficulty for many candidates, especially part (a). Some described plant life and not indigenous people, and many failed to develop the idea that the recommendations from the WCFSD would help to protect the native communities' homes and way of life. The possibilities of large scale migration and loss of global diversity were largely ignored. Part (b) was answered considerably better, referring to threats of climate change and reduced rainfall, but many responses quoted large parts of the resources which was unnecessary.

A typical full marks answer

It is important that the recommendations are followed for the sake of the native communities to prevent the destruction of their homes. If the forest is destroyed, they would be forced to move to a less suitable environment where food and resources would be less plentiful and increased connections with the outside world could lead to the rapid spread of disease. It is also important that the recommendations are followed for cultural reasons because the destruction of the forest

would reduce the Earth's diversity because rare tribes would disappear from the planet. The world's weather systems would also be badly affected if the recommendations were not followed. If the trees were destroyed, there would be less oxygen and more carbon dioxide in the air which would lead to rising temperatures, climate change and global warming. Also, there would be less transpiration and less water vapour in the air leading to less rainfall in some areas and damage to the hydrological cycle worldwide.

Section 2: The Options

Question 4

Use Resource 6.

Give two reasons why projects like the one in Somalia will help the Forest Stewardship Council in its attempts to promote responsible management of forests.

Most candidates easily identified reasons why such projects were a good idea in terms of increasing food production and stopping soil erosion and in the setting up of tree nurseries. However, fewer were able to develop the points in terms of income improvement or diffusion to other areas. Many were rather too pre-occupied with the aims of the FSC rather than the positives of the project.

A typical full marks answer

One of the good points about the project in Somalia is that it encourages the setting up of tree nurseries where young trees can be carefully looked after before being transplanted. Fruit trees grown in this way have lead to an increased food supply and more income for local people. Also, it is planned that the local people will eventually take over the running of the project themselves which will give them a sense of ownership. This in turn will allow the FSC to move on to other areas and set up similar projects to help other needy people.

Question 5

Use Resource 7.

(a)   Choose one method featured in the resource and explain why it will damage the forest.
(b)   Choose one method featured in the resource and explain how it will conserve the forest.

This question was generally answered well by the majority of candidates. A range of choices were used, but clear felling, livestock grazing and continuous cropping were the most popular in part (a) and nature conservation and agroforestry the most used in part (b). Some candidates did not fully understand agroforestry and so found it difficult to justify its conservation credentials. Some candidates tended to concentrate on wildlife rather than forest conservation. Both selective logging with replanting and reforestation were used in both sections, but if they were fully justified and well developed, then this was allowed.

A typical full marks answer

Livestock grazing will damage the forest because large areas are cleared to provide pasture land for beef production on large ranches. This change in land use will wipe out many species of plant very quickly. New seedlings may be eaten by the grazing cattle and further prevent regeneration. The pasture land created will quickly deteriorate in quality and soil erosion will occur. This means that the land will become inhospitable for future forest growth and the area of forest will be lost forever.

Nature conservation will conserve and protect the forest from destruction because large areas of the forest will be spared logging, mining or farming development, thus meaning that the ecosystem will remain intact because the forest will not be destroyed by hungry businessmen wanting to simply make a quick profit. The forest will be allowed to grow in a natural way without human interference.

Question 6

Use Resources 8 and 9.

The Forestry Commission has several aims, some of which seem to conflict with each other. Identify and explain two of these conflicts.

This question created a wide range of responses, some of which received very little credit. The better candidates used the list of UK Forestry Commission aims in Resource 9 in pairs to show possible conflicts arising. One of the most popular pairings was 'protect and enhance the environment' and 'to provide recreational facilities'. The point that some recreational facilities could actually harm the environment such as mountain biking or paint-balling was used as an example of the conflict of the aims. Several other pairs of aims were successfully used in the same way. Many weaker candidates either ignored the actual aims completely or tried to explain a conflict using only one aim. Some candidates only explained one conflict from one pair of aims. The need to identify possible conflicts was suggested in the Teachers' Notes which accompanied the Resource Booklet for staff.

A typical full marks answer

One conflict found in the aims of the UK Forestry Commission is between 'to develop and ensure the best use of the country's forest resources; and to promote the development of the wood-using industry and its efficiency' and 'to protect and enhance the environment'. This is because it is suggesting that we should be using the forests for industrial logging while we should also be protecting the rich biodiversity of the forest at the same time. There will be an inevitable clash between the logging companies and the conservationists. A second conflict is between the aims 'to protect and enhance the environment' and 'to provide recreational facilities'. This is because trees may need to be cut down in order to make way for buildings such as visitor centres and cafes. These buildings need to be accessible, so tracks may need to be developed through the forest which could damage the environment.

Section 3: The Decision

Question 7

Use Resources 10 and 11 plus any ideas from any of the other resources or your own knowledge.

Wentwood Forest in South Wales is one of the U.K.'s largest ancient woodlands and is in urgent need of protection. The Woodland Trust has recently purchased a large section of Wentwood Forest. Four options for its future development have been put forward:

Option 1
The area should be mainly under conifers which can be sold for a profit, with ancient woodland allowed to continue to fight for survival under the canopy.

Option 2
The conifers should be removed and totally replaced by planted native woodland. Recreation should then be encouraged for an economic return.

Option 3
The area should be restored to its former position as an ancient woodland with no conifers, and maintained as a nature reserve with no public access.

Option 4
The area should be completely cleared for timber and then replanted with seedlings of commercial conifers which can be felled in the future.

Tasks
(a)   Choose one of the options above and fully explain two reasons for your choice.
(b)   Give a reason for rejecting each of the other three options.
(c)   Your choice may not be ideal in every way. State a disadvantage of your chosen option.
(d)   Your rejected options may have some good points. Give an advantage of each of your
          rejected options with particular reference to their sustainability.

This proved to be a relatively straightforward decision and many candidates did well by following the suggested structure in the question. The most popular choice was Option Two, but all the other options were selected by a fair number of candidates. However, the reasons given for selecting Options One and Four were not as good as for Options Two and Three. Some weaker candidates tended to merely describe the options for rejection rather than extracting reasons for their unsuitability. Similarly, some of the advantages of rejected options were simply copied from the question and received little credit. There was some confusion between ancient and native woodland which caused problems for some. There was some evidence that centres had undertaken additional research into Wentwood Forest via the internet and this is to be commended. Overall, most centres can be pleased with the outcomes in this section of the paper.

A typical full marks answer

I chose option 2 because it would be the most sustainable option economically, socially and environmentally. The ancient woodland would be restored and the conifers removed, thus enhancing the rich biodiversity of the forest. As Resource 11 states, "ancient woodland is the richest wildlife habitat in the UK and is our equivalent of the rainforest" and so it shows how precious Wentwood Forest is and how the ancient woodland needs to be protected. This is the environmental aspect of the option's sustainability. Socially and economically, the option provides jobs for the local people through the encouragement of recreation. Diversification could occur with activities such as paintballing in the forest, which would provide money for forest conservation as well as an income for local people.

I rejected option 1 because the ancient woodland would not be able to fight for survival under the canopy. Resource 11 states how below the conifer canopy is an inhospitable darkness, and although the option would be sustainable socially and economically through felling, the woodland would not be protected environmentally.

I did not choose option 3 because although it would preserve the ancient woodland and be sustainable environmentally, it would not be sustainable socially or economically due to the fact that no public access would mean less jobs for the local people or money put into the local economy.

Finally, I did not choose option 4 because clearing the forest to make space for commercial timber would destroy huge amounts of habitats and the rich biodiversity found in an ancient woodland. It does not mention conservation or environmentally sustainable methods of preservation.

One disadvantage of my chosen option is that the native woodland may not be as economically rewarding in industry as the conifers. They do not grow as quickly, so the amount of felling would be far more limited. This could affect the environmental sustainability of the option. Also, it is possible that some recreational activities such as mountain biking could damage the ancient woodland.

However, the other options did have some positive points. Option 1was economically and socially sustainable due to the jobs and income provided through the felling of the conifers. This would make the forest economically valuable.

Option 3 conserved the forest completely, thus helping to "restore this ancient woodland to its former glory." The rich biodiversity would return, thus making this option environmentally sustainable.

Option 4 may not have been environmentally sustainable, but was economically and socially because the timber could be felled for economic use and then replanted. This would provide a large amount of jobs for the local area as well as economic gain.

2402/01 Terminal Examination (Foundation)

General Comments

With one exception, all Assistant Examiners and Team Leaders considered that the 2008 paper was of an appropriate level of difficulty for Foundation candidates. The clarity and quality of the Resource Booklet Insert was of a high standard and most candidates were able to access the resources to demonstrate their skills and understanding. Some resources proved challenging, in particular the distorted map or cartogram in Fig. 3, the contrasting scales on the population line graphs in Fig. 4 and the unusual photograph of part of New Zealand in Fig. 6. However, as in previous examinations, most candidates responded well to these challenges to score marks.

Candidates were required to show their answers on a sketch for Question 3c and as a diagram for Question 5d. Those who scored well did so because they applied valid geographical ideas, not just because they were able to manage the challenge of a different style of answer.
Some candidates struggled with the literacy skills required when comparing features or evidence to describe differences in Questions 2c), 4c) and 7c). Some candidates still waste time by writing convoluted sentences to (a) (b) questions when stating the answer is all that is required.

Case study choice and application again differentiated the most successful candidates from the rest.

Two comments from Assistant Examiners highlight this:

From an experienced marker:

" Although the case studies were very fair, and offered the candidates ample opportunity to show their knowledge, there was a disappointing grasp of the content required. In many cases in Section A, candidates
used case studies from inappropriate regions and thus dampened their marks."

A first time marker commented on aspects of performance that surprised her:

" I felt that there was huge variation on the performance and this being the first time I have been an examiner, it is difficult to comment on how well they have performed. There were a significant number of candidates whose vocabulary and interpretation of the graphs, maps etc. was excellent and in my opinion could have coped very well with the higher tier paper. For many others, their problems lay in not reading the questions carefully enough and I could see why their answer was incorrect and how they had misread the question. The biggest shock to me was the vast number of candidates who when asked for EU/LEDC/MEDC chose an example which did not fit the question. Many, many marks were lost because of this and it was by far the biggest mistake I came across. I don't know if it was not reading the question, or a genuine lack of knowledge of place. Their knowledge of causes of natural hazards was poor (1e and 5d). I also found that where candidates were asked to compare two things they generally performed badly and wrote about them separately rather than directly comparing them as the mark scheme required (2c, 4c, 7c)"

Teachers' Tips

1. Use of comparative language:
Use questions 2c) 4c) and 7c) and the mark scheme guidelines to develop candidates' language skills for comparing and contrasting evidence and features.

2. Writing concisely:
Encourage candidates to simply write the required answer to part (a) and (b) questions instead of a longer time-consuming sentence. Also look for (a) (b) questions where a short sentence is appropriate e.g. Question 2b)

3. Writing clear developed answers:
Try using the P.E.E. paragraph approach for (c) (d) questions and the (ii) and (iii) parts of the case study:

P = make your point or state your idea
E = describe the evidence or detail
E = explain how the point or idea is a cause or consequence of whatever the question requires.

The P and the first E are often sufficient for (c) (d) questions.

4. Practice expressing ideas and features in diagram or sketch form:
Use examples from the 2008 examination and other past papers and check the Levels mark scheme so that candidates know how to sketch, label and annotate ideas and features relevant to the requirements of the question.

5. Develop place and location knowledge via case study examples:
Many candidates still refer to Africa as an LEDC. Many lacked the place knowledge to describe the locations of volcano clusters shown in Fig 8b.

6. Develop candidates understanding of geographical and specification vocabulary:
The following key words caused difficulties for some candidates:

QA1 (e) physical processes

QA3 (d) relief and **climate**

QA3 (e) economic activity

QB4 (a) water store and **water transfer**

QB4 (e) physical environment and **natural vegetation (plants)**

QC6 (a) primary   secondary   tertiary

QC6 (e) aid or investment programme and **sustainable**

QC7 (e) settlement and **quality of life**

7. Give candidates opportunities to practice choosing their best four questions:
Rubric error, where candidates answer more than the four required questions, continues to be a scourge of this examination to the detriment of candidates, centres and examiners.
Use the grid on page 2 of the question-answer booklet, to practice reading all the questions, ticking the boxes, noting possible case studies, choosing four questions, putting the four into order-best first.
All in 15 minutes!

If Question B5 is the best question then do it first. Draw up your own top tips for choosing questions.

Comments on Individual Questions

Section A

Question A1

This question was based on regional differences in Italy and the impact and causes of natural hazards.

Question A1 was universally popular and was answered by 91% of candidates. It was generally well answered.

a) b) Most candidates were able to successfully interpret the statistical information presented in Fig.1 to gain full marks and an insight into North-South regional differences in Italy

c) The most able candidates were able to use the information to craft clearly written responses. These answers either gave relevant data and then a general point or vice versa. Most common was the use of unemployment data related to job opportunities, followed by references to household spending linked to wage levels. Many candidates used the data effectively to make valid, general comments about North-South variations in quality of life. Some candidates misinterpreted the Car Ownership data to make erroneous comments about transport availability.

Some candidates failed to score marks as they did not make it explicit whether they were writing about the North or the South of Italy. Some candidates did not follow the instruction *' use evidence from Fig.1'* and attempted to use their own, often inaccurate, background knowledge.

d) Most candidates scored well with links to family and friends, poverty, tourism and jobs, fertile soils and farming given as the most common reasons. Uncertainty over the eruption prediction and perception of risk were also explained by some candidates. One assistant examiner felt that the photograph of the Bay of Naples with Mount Vesuvius acted as a distractor and side tracked many candidates into writing about imports and exports, the scenery and the sea acting as an evacuation route/lava cooler to score no marks.

e) The case study question yielded an encouraging range of valid contemporary examples. These were mostly focused on flooding, with Boscastle and the Rhine floods the most common. Various places affected by the UK floods of 2007 were also evident including Hull, Sheffield and Tewkesbury. Many of the better responses showed detailed local knowledge of the impact of the flooding. Less secure were explanations of the physical causes, with most limited to references to heavy rainfall.

Some candidates were able to use EU volcanic eruptions and earthquakes as their case studies, some attempting to use data for Vesuvius from Fig. 8a. A few candidates wrote about forest fires in Greece and Portugal, the impact of drought in Spain and the heatwave in France.

Inevitably candidates still select their best known natural hazards case study and ignore the EU place requirement. The Kobe earthquake continues to be the most common example of this.

Reference to past papers can show candidates how a natural hazard case study appears in Section A.
Revision can focus on choosing the right place to fit a Section A question as well as the more open requirements of Question B5.

Question A2

This question was based on population change in LEDCs.

This was the second most popular Section A question being answered by 76% of candidates.

a) b) Most candidates coped well with the challenge of a distorted map or cartogram. They gave an interesting range of responses to outline the problems associated with its interpretation, such as the lack of a key, no actual data, misleading use of colours, too much distortion of shape for most countries. Centres are encouraged to explore the source of this particular resource for further examples.

c) As reported under General Comments, this question discriminated those who were able to structure their answers in terms of explicit comparative language and data from those who wrote separate descriptive accounts. Many candidates exploited the differences in scale to directly compare starting and finishing population levels. Some focused upon rates of change shown by the lines, noting that African had the steeper rate of increase compared to Asia slowing down. Years were also given as valid development of answers. The best answers showed a good command of written communication with candidates employing a range of connectives, such as *whereas* and *however*, to clarify their answers. Some candidates gave reasons to explain the changes, ignoring the command word *'describe'*.

d) Some candidates were able to apply their knowledge and understanding of the factors which affect population change to the context shown in the graphs. References to birth, death, infant mortality and fertility rates were used to write valid explanations. Some answers were also linked to differences in development and government policy, stating that Japan and China would have a significant effect on population change in Asia. The impact of migration was a popular misconception amongst weaker answers, stating that migration from Africa to Asia for better jobs and opportunities could explain continental scale differences in population change.

e) The case study requirement allowed many candidates a valid opportunity to show their knowledge of China's population policies. Naturally, some responses were cloudy about the current state of Chinese government policy but most received full credit for detailed points about the one child policy. Some centres case studies focused on national scale change in India and Bangladesh with references to development in family planning and health care as valid factors. Rural-urban migration in Brazil and Kenya, with place detail about favelas and shanty towns in Nairobi, also produced high scoring answers.

A common misconception with many candidates was the notion that overall population is declining in their chosen LEDC. Sadly, this question also saw the common error of citing Africa as an LEDC.

Question A3

This question focused on climate differences in New Zealand with an economic activity case study.

Compared to questions A1 and A2, this was an unpopular question being answered by only 33% of candidates.

a) b) Were well answered by most candidates who were clearly able to link information in Fig. 5 to the cross section sketch in the Question-Answer booklet.

c) Most candidates failed to score any marks. Assistant Examiners have offered two explanations. Firstly, that candidates did not read or notice question (c), they moved on after labelling the sketch for question (b).

Secondly, and more likely, most candidates lacked secure knowledge of relief rainfall and were unable to apply to the context of the sketch. Some recognised the affect of the mountains and/or the westerly prevailing winds. Reference to the rain shadow effect was almost non existent. Past questions focused on climate have also yielded limited responses. The unfamiliar challenge of annotating a sketch was also too much for many Foundation candidates. Centres can use this question to prepare candidates for this type of question in the future.

d) This question did not yield the expected references to climate and relief making it difficult for farmers but providing attractions and opportunities for tourists. Most candidates wrote about how global climate change could affect farming and how the cold weather would put tourists off. Some did write about the cold and steep relief making it difficult to grow crops and the mountains attracting sight-seers, climbers and skiers.

Some Assistant Examiners felt that the unusual angle of the photograph Fig. 6 confused some candidates rather than supporting their thinking with visual evidence.

e) This type of case study question has appeared in many previous papers. However, most candidates still appear to have no idea what an economic activity is and valid MEDC examples of change were extremely rare. Changes in farming in Japan with reference to the development of hydroponics were amongst the few examples to score highly. Less successful were vague ideas about the USA's 'rust belt' and 'sun belt' and their related economic activities.

Section B

Question B4

This question was about hydrographs and change with a physical environment/ecosystem case study.

As with previous papers this question was chosen by few candidates, being answered by only 12% of candidates. Limited knowledge of drainage basins meant it was also the lowest scoring question.

a) b) Success with question (a) was limited to those candidates who knew what the terms 'store' and 'transfer' meant. Candidates unaware of such terms were more successful with question (b) which relied solely on map interpretation skills.

c) Some candidates were able to construct valid comparative descriptions based on temporal and magnitude differences, making good use of the x and y axes on each hydrograph to provide their data. Most lacked the knowledge of hydrographs and their meaning to be able to score any marks at all. One Team Leader commented on the dearth of specialist terms, such as time-lag, peak discharge and rising and falling limbs.

d) The same applied to this question, with very few candidates able to apply valid knowledge of river networks and drainage basin systems to score marks.

e) Candidates were more successful with this part of Question B4. The best responses were focused on tropical rainforests, with some providing detailed knowledge of the variations in vegetation found in different layers of rainforest. Valid links between high temperatures and rainfall were well explained. Less secure were ideas about soil fertility, with fewer candidates able to explain the links with decomposing vegetation.

A few candidates wrote clear, valid responses about savannah and desert environments. Many chose gardens, parks or farm land as their physical environment.

Question B5

This question focused on volcanoes with methods of natural hazard protection for the case study.

As in previous years, this was a popular question, being answered by 87% of candidates.

a) b) Nearly all candidates successfully interpreted the information shown in Fig 8a to score two marks for question (a). However limited place and location knowledge impaired the responses of some candidates for question (b). Most correctly identified Indonesia and/or South East Asia, less convincing were the places given for the Central American cluster of volcanoes. Some candidates limited their answers to a mere 'east' and 'west'.

c) Most candidates were able to explain valid ideas for this question. Some drew upon ideas given in Fig 8a, for example the VEI. Others used their own knowledge and focused upon differences in population density and economic development. Many used the latter to contrast LEDCs and MEDCs and their ability to monitor volcanic eruptions and prepare for their impact. Some answers were also developed using case study exemplification.

d) By contrast, question (d) was either hit or miss. Fifty percent of candidates failed to score any marks for this question. The majority of candidates produced diagrams showing collision zones, with what one Exam Team Leader described as the 'toothpaste theory' showing lava squeezed to the surface between converging plates. Others drew representations of volcanic eruptions, some with detailed labels, without any reference to plate movements. These answers did not score any marks. Some candidates scored marks for showing the correct plate movements for subduction zones and fewer still for constructive plate margins. However most were unable to show or explain the processes inherent in these plate movements which cause volcanic eruptions.

Some candidates produced sketches to show how plate movements cause earthquakes.

e) Most candidates were able to show valid ideas about how to protect people and property from the effects of natural hazards. Some continued with the focus on volcanoes to write about monitoring, safety zones and evacuation. Strategies for flooding and tropical storms also scored well, as did earthquake ideas that focused on building design and earthquake drills. Ideas about how hazards can be monitored were less secure and some candidates wrote about how the timing of earthquakes can be predicted. The magnitude of the hazard and levels of economic development were used to explain the success, or otherwise of the ideas described.

Section C

Question C6

This question was about trade and economic activity in China with an aid/investment project case study

It was answered by 52% of candidates making it marginally the more popular Section C question.

a) b) Most candidates correctly described the manufacturing job shown in the photograph Fig. 9. However fewer candidates were able to classify this activity as secondary. Most candidates achieved two marks for question (b) by identifying Japan and the USA from the flow diagram Fig.10.

c) Most candidates were able to suggest valid reasons for China's pattern of trade with distance, trade relations, mutual need/benefit, China producing goods cheaper than other countries were common factors. Some candidates remarked on increasing TNC investment in China as a valid link.

d) This question was also generally well answered. Good points of the Olympic Games focused on job creation and increased business due to visitors and tourism. Increased congestion and pollution were the main bad points given. Some candidates highlighted possible terrorist attack and human rights/child labour issues. Some candidates did not achieve full marks as their answers were not focused on the impact of the Olympic Games on the people of Beijing.

e) Responses to the aid/investment programme case study were very disappointing given the lifespan of the current specification and its focus on sustainable development issues. Some candidates produced convincing answers about Goat Projects in Africa, the majority gave shallow responses about aid charities such as Oxfam and Comic Relief, lacking precise information about the nature of the aid or investment. Most candidates were unable to comment on the sustainability of their chosen project with many simply stating that the aid was a success. Few saw the unsustainable nature of charity-based aid.

Given the sophisticated understanding of sustainability that many candidates display in the DME examination, they should be able to apply this to other areas of their learning especially in the obvious context of aid and investment projects.

Question C7

This question focused on changes and contrasts in the city of Liverpool, with a settlement change case study.

This question was answered by 47% of candidates.

a) b) Most candidates were able to show their map reading skills to score two marks for part (a) Many candidates ignored the *'shown on the O/S Map Extract'* part of question (b) and gave Paradise Street and Dingle (from Fig. 11) as two other attractions for visitors.

c) This question again differentiated on candidates' ability to use comparative language to express their geography ideas. Differences in age, location, appearance, and possible quality of life were all explained as valid contrasting ideas. Some candidates wrote two separate descriptions of each housing area to score no marks.

d) More able candidates recognised the city centre location of the Paradise Street retail development and commented on accessibility and threshold populations. Some made use of the O/S map and Fig.11 to comment on specific transport routes, the size of the site and its proximity to popular tourist attractions, guaranteeing plenty of custom and trade. A common misconception was the use of the docks to import goods to the shopping centre.

e) This case study question prompted some good uses of local examples from candidates. Whilst some of these were of an 'anytown' nature, others did provide some convincing place detail in their responses.

Quality of life comments showed some variety with more jobs, better services, less traffic congestion being the most common. Outside local examples, favelas in Rio and shanty town areas in Nairobi were popular examples. Very few candidates wrote about rural settlements.

2403/01 Terminal Examination (Higher)

General Comments

Feedback suggests that this year's paper was considered appropriate and accessible for a pleasing number of candidates. Certainly, it has allowed much positive achievement and, at the top end, a significant number are scoring in the 90s. As always, some find the paper a challenge and disappointingly there are a significant minority who simply do not attempt section e questions, and this despite scoring well in other sections.

Here is a selection of comments from Examiners this summer:

"This appears to have been a very successful, accessible paper, affording all candidates abundant opportunities to achieve their best."

"The majority had ample opportunity to show what they knew, understood and could do."

"A well balanced paper with a good range of contemporary resources and material."

"The clarity of layout of their answers greatly assisted in the task of marking their scripts, although many were hardly concise."

"Some excellent examples of the application of case studies, particularly for A1 and A2, but some still write everything they know about the Kobe earthquake and China's one-child policy."

There remain many examples of good practice and, in particular, a very pleasing improvement in the use of geographical terms. Many reach very high standards and write fluently and to the point, reflecting some excellent and effective teaching. 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 these general points would help your candidates improve their level of attainment?

1. Insist upon differences being articulated directly rather than as separate accounts. In both questions A3e and C7c, many candidates simply did not make clear the difference, often leaving the examiner to do the work. Much improvement is possible here.

2. Adopt an approach where candidates write two paragraphs for two answers. Many do, especially after last year's advice, but too many do not: It helps structure an answer, making it easier for both the candidate and the examiner. P.E.E. – point, evidence & explanation is a strategy that helps numerous candidates write better answers for **each** paragraph.

3. Practice a variety of diagram skills – annotation, cross-sections, landforms, sketch maps, and systems diagrams. The standard varies considerably and saw much differentiation for this year's A2 e, A3c and B5c. Certainly this is an area where many could improve their marks significantly.

4. Try to eliminate sweeping generalisations and stereotyping. This year we were told that there is no contraception in Africa, that everyone has left the 'Rust Belt' and Hokkaido, whilst the Mezzogiorno has returned to LEDC status! Seldom does this sort of answer accompany anything beyond level one.

5. Ensure that the difference between causes and effects is clear with all you teach. Most years this relates to Natural Hazard questions, but this year applied to A2c and population change.

6. Check that all are clear as to what an 'economic activity' is. This year the term appeared in two questions – A3d and C6e. In each, some were unable to identify correct economic activities and so access the question.

More specific points that would help many:

a)   The difference between **altitude** and **relief** (A3d & e);

b)   What is a **settlement**, as opposed to a country or part of a settlement (C7e);

c)   What is meant when **scale** of an area is requested (C6e);

d)   Which is **latitude** and which **longitude** (A3a);

e)   What is meant by **quality of life**, beyond 'having more money'?(C6d)

This year questions A1, A2 and B5 proved distinctly more popular than others, whilst there was a relatively even split between the number answering C6 and C7. Both the least popular questions, A3 and B4, led to a polarisation of results with some very high and low scores.

Comments on Individual Questions

Section A

A1   This question based upon Italy and regional differences was universally popular.

Very few candidates had problems with a), b) and c), although some did not emphasise 'pattern' in b).

d) The image of migration saw some perceptive answers, some very individual but creditable, such as commenting upon the mountains, clothing, road and colours. However, weaker answers spent time on wordy responses parading knowledge about regional differences in Italy, making only minimal reference to the image.

e) The best answers seen used the Rhine Floods of 1995, whilst Lynmouth also provided a rewarding case study for a few Centres. However, choosing an example without sound human impact meant that for many Boscastle, the 2007 UK floods and Mt Etna were less successful. This was a shame given the fact that up to date examples were being utilised.

A2   A popular choice of question, based upon aspects of population in LEDCs.

a) & b) were straightforward, although a number had difficulties in expressing themselves clearly with regard to the cartogram.

c) Most candidates coped with the graphs for Asia and Africa adequately, but weaker candidates referred to causes of growth rather than the requested effects.

d) Most clearly knew the answers and scored well, but some gave far more than two answers and others provided inaccurate sweeping generalisations that showed little recognition of the diversity present within LEDCs.

e) Brazil was generally successfully used by most for the population distribution of a chosen LEDC, but Egypt and Nigeria also proved very appropriate choices. The use of sketch maps with two or more patterns clearly shaded and detailed place specific annotation was enough for full marks, without any extra text … but only the rest seem brave enough to do it. Weaker answers often focused solely on the city of Rio, migration and favelas or generalised about the whole of the Amazon. The misconception that SE Brazil is flat and lowland still persists.

A3   The mixture of latitude & longitude, climate and regions was not popular.

a) & b) were generally fine; the description in b) probably better done than the similar task in Q1b. However, some confused their latitude and longitude in a)!

c) Saw a considerable variety of answers with whole Centres scoring highly with well annotated cross-sections, clearly mentioning relief rainfall in the west and a rain shadow in the east with the processes leading to them. Others failed to appreciate that annotation involves explanation or simply failed to use the cross-section at all. Some decided to attach it, even though they had not answered A3!

d) The aerial photograph presented more problems than anticipated; some because economic activities were not stressed, some because weaker candidates did not read the image well. Farming and tourism were the obvious economic activities to choose.

 e) It was pleasing to see some unprompted annotated sketch maps used to show regional differences within an MEDC. Japanese regions were the favourite choice, with those of the USA also frequently used, unfortunately often generalising about the 'rust' and 'sun belts'. Weaker candidates usually identified vague regions 'N. Japan – S. Japan' with indifferent results; whilst many produced separate accounts rather than stressing differences.

Section B

B4   This question saw a fall in numbers answering B4, probably more to do with the climate case study rather than the hydrographs.

a) (i) caused a problem for many candidates who were unable to provide the suitable input, rainfall, unlike a) (ii), which almost all correctly identified.

b) & c) proved challenging if you did not spot the different y axis scales to the three hydrographs, but it was disturbing to see many think the river was flowing out of the Solway Firth. Many easily managed their full marks for this and d) once this hurdle had been overcome.

e) Most candidates successfully chose either the UK or tropical rainforest climate and were able to focus upon describing and explaining two or more climatic features. A number, however, were distracted into detailed descriptions of the rainforest ecosystem instead.

B5   It was the turn of volcanoes for the Natural Hazard question this year, initially based upon understanding and knowledge of plate tectonics. A very popular question as ever.

Neither a) or b) presented large problems, but too many candidates were dropping these easy marks, usually because they could not name both types of plate boundary associated with volcanoes.

c) The quality of diagram and annotation varied widely. Very good diagrams with relevant, detailed annotation were less common than expected, while lots of diagrams showed plates colliding to create something akin to the Himalayas, rather than a subduction zone. Overall, this was the weakest section c answer for many Centres.

d) There were bland responses by some, but generally this was well answered, including relevant knowledge of pyroclastic flows, shield and composite volcanoes.

e) Hazard protection and its success led to one or two refreshing answers focussing upon very recent hazards in Burma and China, but otherwise answers were dominated by successful accounts of Kobe and Mt St Helens, with the occasional interesting discussion of the cyclone in Bangladesh. Most selected an event, rather than the requested hazard type, but this did not really matter. The evaluation of its success was nearly always less well answered than the protection methods, especially if they incorrectly suggested that Kobe had no protection before 1995!

Section C

C6 This Economic Activities question based upon China saw a welcome increase in the number answering it compared to recent years.

There were few errors in a) or b), the circular graph presenting few problems.

c) There were some good ideas expressed about trade, with better candidates recognising the significance of geographical vicinity and political/trading groups. Many made excellent use of the resource to develop points.

d) Quite simply, much recent advice about 'quality of life' in these reports and at INSET seems to have been of no avail. Very few made explicit links to 'quality of life and so managed no more than four marks out of six.

e) A frequent and low scoring approach to this question was to write about an area rather than specify an economic activity and do what was asked. Others, inevitably, ignored 'recent' and produced historical accounts. Perhaps the best answers focussed upon a specific local scale activity such as a farm or factory. Few answers for South Wales and the 'Rust Belt' were successful.

C7 This question was based upon the OS map of Liverpool and settlement change.

a) & b) were generally well answered, but a significant number failed to respond accurately to produce a four figure grid reference.

c) An apparently straightforward question with clear photographs of two residential areas to compare, but too often answers were separate accounts in which differences were embedded, leaving the examiner to search for them and, consequently, marks lost through poor answering technique.

d) There exists confusion amongst many as to the requirements of a retail establishment, ie individual shops. Many incorrectly suggested that the location near the Albert Docks would be so that import (and export!) would be cheaper. As a result many only gave one acceptable reason. It was pleasing to see answers making excellent use of the map and other resources.

e) Once again candidates needed to read the question carefully and adhere to the clearly stated focus of 'settlement issues' arising from population change. There were some excellent responses, some based upon local knowledge, others based upon Cairo, Aliano or Rio. However, too many simply gave descriptions of growth without ever touching upon issues or problems. Others could not even choose a settlement, with China a far too frequent choice.

2404/01 Internal Assessment

General Comments:

Three hundred and ninety five centres entered with over sixteen thousand candidates for moderation in June 2008. This is a slight decrease on last year and shows that a significant number of centres are taking the opportunities offered by staged assessment to get coursework out of the way at a relatively early stage in the two-year GCSE cycle. This is a definite advantage as it reduces pressure on candidates in the busy period prior to the Easter break and allows teachers to concentrate on vital preparation for the terminal examination.

Administration by centres was generally very good. However, a small number did withdraw their candidates as they were entered in error. Examination Officers and Heads of department need to be more aware of the procedures as these are expensive errors. The majority of centres did complete the required paperwork, but some had to be asked to send the authentication form (CCS160). Most centres responded very promptly to their moderators request for a sample of work and the work was packaged correctly.

The standard of marking is excellent in the vast majority of centres. Only 17 % of centres marks were scaled this time, with13 % being adjusted downwards and 4 % upwards. There was a tendency for some centres to over mark at the upper end and to give too much credit for descriptive analysis and unsubstantiated conclusions. In addition there was some evidence of maps not being utilised effectively and photographs and diagrams being labelled and not annotated. The drawing of graphs was an area where variety, imagination and initiative needed to be demonstrated by candidates if they were to be awarded higher level skills.

The quality of work continues to improve. Candidates are demonstrating an awareness of enquiry strategies, particularly in the context of individual studies. Many showed a clear theoretical and local context to their investigation. The best work was focused and used clear aims and hypotheses to help organise and structure their investigation. This allowed candidates to analyse their results and make substantiated conclusions. Centres which had a methodology for data collection were able to make a good evaluation of their investigation at the end. They could discuss the techniques they used and the problems they faced and how they could improve things. This improvement could be due to the INSET focus on coursework assessment.

There continues to be some excellent use of ICT with annotated digital photographs and diagrams. However, computer generated graphs do not always offer a wide enough range or variety beyond bars and pie charts. Scatter graphs and proportional symbols could be used where appropriate. The best examples are where graphs are integrated with maps. Centres continue to slim down their units and candidates are becoming more concise. Some centres showed excellent analysis of their results giving percentages and attempting to give reasons for their findings. These were also used to substantiate their conclusions. Statistical analysis, eg Spearman rank, has increased with most students understanding it's significance.

Overall, it is fair to say that the Internal Assessment component of this Specification is working well and enhancing the candidates overall performance at GCSE level. Investigations are well designed and involve effective fieldwork, some under extreme weather conditions and students enjoy the experience. Geography teachers deserve congratulation for their efforts on their students' behalf.

Grade Thresholds

General Certificate of Secondary Education
Geography C (Specification Code 1988)
June 2008 Examination Series

Unit Threshold Marks

Unit		Maximum Mark	a*	a	b	c	d	e	f	g
2401F	Raw	60	-	-	-	44	37	30	24	18
	UMS	83	-	-	-	72	60	48	36	24
2401H	Raw	60	52	46	40	35	25	20	-	-
	UMS	120	108	96	84	72	60	48	-	-
2402	Raw	100	-	-	-	68	59	51	43	35
	UMS	139	-	-	-	120	100	80	60	40
2403	Raw	100	81	72	63	54	42	36	-	-
	UMS	200	180	160	140	120	100	80	-	-
2404	Raw	40	36	32	28	25	20	16	12	8
	UMS	80	72	64	56	48	40	32	24	16

Specification Options

Foundation Tier

	Max Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Overall Threshold Marks (UMS)	279	-	-	-	240	200	160	120	80
Percentage in Grade	-	-	-	-	23.18	28.05	23.42	15.62	7.87
Cumulative Percentage in Grade	-	-	-	-	23.18	51.23	74.65	90.28	98.14

The total entry for the examination was 7179

Higher Tier

	Max Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Overall Threshold Marks (UMS)	400	360	320	280	240	200	160	-	-
Percentage in Grade	-	13.59	27.81	30.47	20.57	6.38	1.02	-	-
Cumulative Percentage in Grade	-	13.59	41.39	71.86	92.43	98.82	99.84	-	-

The total entry for the examination was 14 385

Overall

	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Percentage in Grade	9.37	19.19	21.02	21.38	13.10	7.97	4.84	2.44
Cumulative Percentage in Grade	9.37	28.56	49.59	70.97	84.06	92.03	96.87	99.31

The total entry for the examination was 21 564

Statistics are correct at the time of publication.

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