Principal Examiner Feedback
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GCSE

iGCSE Geography (4370) Paper 2H

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Unit 4370 Paper 2H

General comments

This tier again attracted the larger entry. There were some strong scripts showing pleasing consistency across the paper. More than half of the candidature achieved the A-C grade standards. In general, there were fewer scripts containing unanswered gaps. The paper generated a good range of marks and good use made of the stimulus-material. Again, there were candidates sitting this paper who would have been better served by the 1F paper.

Question-specific Comments

Question 1: Water

Generally, a well answered question with most candidates making a strong start with pertinent observations as to how the regimes differ. The concept of spring-summer meltwater was understood by most in (a)(ii), and most could also identify factors such as rock type, vegetation type and urban land use which influence discharge. More able candidates developed their (a)(ii) answers into the realms of explanation. Part (b), the 1F/2H overlap question was as one would expect, far better answered at this tier. There were many labelled diagrams, often two or three per script showing features such as waterfalls, V-shaped valleys and interlocking spurs. More able candidates offered full annotations. Almost all candidates could correctly name a dam and outline its key purposes; many were able to also describe at least one impact, often environmental. There were some balanced and detailed responses on both the Three Gorges and the Aswan High dams.

Question 2: Hazards

There were many decent answers though this question normally scored a little lower than question 1. Few candidates achieved maximum marks in (a)(i) as the thrust of the question was generally missed by candidates, i.e. lowlying land next to the sea inundated by storm surge. Part (a)(ii) tended to be better answered with candidates using the stimulus-material well and many successfully applying the concept of long-term to this information. (a)(iii) and (b) generally generated strong responses though some candidates did confuse earthquake-proofing with storm protection. The final question part discriminated well with only the more able candidates effectively tackling both aspects of the question; only these candidates produced plausible accounts of the genesis of a tropical storm.

Question 3: Production

The aspects of the unit assessed by this question – systems, sectors, factory location and impacts, and informal employment – seem to have been well grasped by the candidates. The majority of candidates wrote convincingly about how factories are liable to relocate when some of their inputs change in price and availability. They were also conversant with factory pollution ((a)(iii)). The concept of informal employment was familiar to most and some were able to describe its characteristics accurately, making use of examples, usually of job types. Part (b) discriminated well. Part (c) was well done by the standards of question finales. The

description element of the question was invariably accurate and thorough. Explaining the sectoral shifts tended to done well on only relatively few scripts.

Question 4: Development

A soundly answered question in the main, and one that continues the trend of recent years in which marks from this question are broadly in line with those from other questions. Development questions now score higher than they did in the early years of this specification. Candidates generally understood the relationships between exports, economic development and population change explored in parts (a)(iii)-(iv). Most candidates appreciated the idea of export-led growth and wrote about export earnings and job-creation in (a)(iii). In (a)(iv) there was a general realisation that economic development tended, for instance, to encourage immigration and lower birth rates. The quality of reasoning and connectedness was pleasing in these two question parts. There was a good general comprehension of the benefits to living standards, public services and infrastructure brought by rising GNP, and many candidates reached Level 2 in (b). Diversification was generally known by candidates ((c)) and most were able to identify Qatar's over-dependence on oil and gas as an argument for diversification. Unfortunately, the second question set was frequently ignored by the candidates resulting in little or no reference being made to sustainable alternatives to fossil fuel production. Few candidates scored more than about half-marks and hit Level 3 standard on part (c).

Question 5: Migration

No part of this question proved to be anything other than straightforward for the vast majority of candidates. Most were clear about the meaning of net international migration ((a)(ii)) and appreciated that greater employment prospects in periods of economic growth lead to positive net international migration. The push and pull model was familiar to candidates who in the main, were able to identify relevant factors despite the switch of context from international to urban-to-rural between parts (b) and (c). The finale question in (c)(ii) failed to generate the candidates' best geography in this question. Answers were typically of a more satisfactory than good standard because they tended to lack a depth of description, including examples, and a balance of coverage between the two spatial areas in question.

Question 6: Urban Environments

A generally well-answered question on a popular topic within urban environments. The stimulus-material on the world's largest cities was generally well interpreted for parts (a)(i)-(ii), and the term, mega-city appeared to have been introduced to virtually all candidates. Their problems from crime to congestion to lack of services was well-known ((b)(i)) as was strategies for addressing the problems, usually self-help schemes and rural development programmes ((b)(ii). Unfortunately, not all candidates were able to place this information into the context of the named city requested. Knowing case studies in detail is one of the hallmarks of the level 3 response. Part (a)(iv) was usually answered at best at a 2-3 mark standard; few went beyond statements about industrialisation and rural-to-urban migration. Surprisingly, little or no reference was made to natural population increase.

Section B

Question 7: Fragile Environments

This was again the overwhelmingly popular choice in this optional section of the paper. It also tended to be a fairly high scoring question in which knowledge and understanding of deforestation was very sound. Most candidates showed good comprehension of Figure 7 and identified the appropriate evidence for positive marks in (a)(ii). It was encouraging to read the many linked explanations of the environmental, economic and climatic impacts of deforestation in (b). The reasons for deforestation were well-known and a good range was evident on many scripts though examples, especially locational ones were often absent. Part (d) proved to be a little challenging for many candidates who whilst either knowing of sustainable forestry schemes such as agro-forestry, replanting, slash-and-burn or being able to elaborate on the newspaper headline, gave little insight into how and why international cooperation was needed to address the global issue of rainforest deforestation. These candidates had earlier written about deforestation as a global issue. Very few referred to the debt relief and aid schemes linked to arresting deforestation.

Question 8: Globalisation

Not many candidates attempted this question but those that did produced satisfactory marks. The early question parts ((a)(i)-(iii)) based directly or indirectly on the stimulus-material (Figure 8) were fairly well-handled by the candidates who were familiar with the concept of a TNC and were generally able to see contrasting global patterns and offer some explanation. (b)(i) created problems for some for whom the term seemed unfamiliar. (b)(ii), however, tended to be well done with the majority of candidates being comfortable with a range of relevant factors, including aviation, satellite technology, the media, the United Nations etc… The finale question part on the advantages and disadvantages of TNCs for LEDCs is a well-established topic and one that seems to have been well taught as judged by the quality of most responses to (c).

Question 9: Human Welfare

This was a fairly unpopular choice but was a high-scoring question for those that did choose it. The terms, life expectancy and infant mortality rate were well understood, and (a)(iii) proved to be a high-scoring task with most candidates being able to identify and develop at least two contributory factors. Part (c) was often the candidates' weakest answer in this question with many candidates getting the focus of the question wrong and concentrating on examples of aid rather than on how aid improves human welfare. Higher level marks were rare because this thrust in the question was rarely addressed. The finale task (part (d)) was generally well answered with plentiful references to quality of life, the HDI (Human Development Index) and individual social indicators.

IGCSE Geography 4370 Statistics

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grading option 1:   03 Written Alternative
                          1F Written Paper

Grade	Max. Mark	C	D	E	F	G
Overall Subject Grade Boundaries	100	52	45	38	31	24

Grading Option 2:   04 Coursework
                          1F Written Paper

Grade	Max. Mark	C	D	E	F	G
Overall Subject Grade Boundaries	100	51	44	37	30	23

Grading Option 3:   03 Written Alternative
                          2H Written Paper

Grade	Max. Mark	*	A	B	C	D	E
Overall Subject Grade Boundaries	100	70	62	54	46	38	34

Grading Option 4:   04 Coursework
                          2H Written Paper

Grade	Max. Mark	*	A	B	C	D	E
Overall Subject Grade Boundaries	100	69	61	53	45	37	33