GEOGRAPHY

Overall grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 11	12 – 24	25 – 34	35 – 46	47 – 57	58 – 69	70 – 100

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 11	12 – 23	24 – 33	34 – 45	46 – 57	58 – 69	70 – 100

General comments

In general, centres now seem to have a good grasp of what is required by the current syllabus. Overall, the performance of candidates this session was slightly weaker than in the November 2003 session. The standard of work submitted for internal assessment was sound. There was no obvious difference in the two externally assessed components between the standard of responses to structured questions and that to those questions requiring extended writing. In both cases, the stronger responses were very impressive, demonstrating a high level of knowledge alongside a mature understanding of contemporary issues and concerns.

Recommendations

Candidates should be encouraged to:

a) use clearly located, real-world examples to illustrate points made in responses, even if this is not specifically demanded by the wording of the particular question

b) practice writing responses under timed conditions, using the mark weighting allocated to each part of a question as a guide to the length and depth of answer expected

c) pay particular attention to the differences between command terms (such as describe, explain and evaluate)

d) be familiar with, and use, appropriate geographical terminology

e) structure essay answers in a logical manner, paying attention to sequential development and synthesis

f) practice the use of neat, well-annotated diagrams and maps.

Higher level internal assessment

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 3	4 – 7	8 – 11	12 – 15	16 – 19	20 – 23	24 – 30

The range and suitability of the work submitted

Teachers continue to opt for safe subjects although there were some examples of interesting topics particularly in physical geography. Teachers need to think how human geography topics can be made less pedestrian and more dynamic.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Students are beginning to introduce their topics well and integrate theory with local context. The quality of methodologies varies considerably and students often do not understand the significance of good quality sampling techniques. The use of statistical techniques remains weak and students rarely discuss effectively the significance of their result. Students fail to gain higher marks in section D when they merely describe their results rather than critically analyse them. Conclusions were particularly weak this session and teachers are advised to seriously consider what is required in this section (E).

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- Teachers should supply a focused hypothesis that will help to direct the students' thought processes.

- Students should identify the tools of analysis that they wish to use before collecting their data.

- Identify ways in which a piece of fieldwork can be made "unique"

Further comments

At the moment students are wasting a lot of words with abstracts (which are unnecessary) and overlong descriptions especially in Section B and D. The word limit will be a constraint for many centres in the future.

Standard level internal assessment

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 3	4 – 6	7 – 11	12 – 15	16 – 19	20 – 23	24 – 30

The range and suitability of the work submitted

There was an interesting range of work from rivers, coasts and micro-climates to urban studies, rural-urban migration in LEDCs. The river studies were however rather dull and teachers need to plan more challenging exercises for candidates.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A   Hypotheses and questions

Generally well done but some schools need to narrow the focus of their research projects so that candidates stay more focused on the hypotheses and use appropriate data. The locational context was treated rather weakly by some candidates. There is a need for example for candidates to present a large scale map of river at say 1:50,000 or 1:25,000 to locate the river study as well presenting a map with a tiny river marked on a country or region.

Criterion B   Methods of data collection

Some schools failed to discuss sampling procedures. There was also a lack of suitable data in some research projects that led in some cases to descriptive reports. Apart form these shortcomings, the work achieved under this criteria was generally well done.

Criterion C   Data presentation and processing

The standard of the work under this criterion was quite mixed. The use of computers to analyse results can sometimes be a mixed blessing as graphs may have inappropriate axes, or the.scale too small, or appear too difficult to read. This may reflect a lack of skill using an excel package rather than lack of geographical knowledge. Graphs, maps and photographs sometimes lacked annotations, titles and legends/keys. There was also on occasions an inappropriate use of statistics with for example a person moment correlation on non-random small data sets. Overall however the work was acceptable overall.

Criterion D   Interpretation and analysis

The standard of work under this criterion was sometimes quite weak. There was a lack of reference to the data presented, insufficient reference to hypotheses and insufficient reference to the wider relevance of the candidates' findings to geographical theories and models. In addition, it was rare to find anomalies discussed and in some cases some of the data presented was not discussed at all.

Criterion E   Conclusion and evaluation

Overall there was a fair effort here though few scored really well. Often however the limitations of the study and recommendations for further work were often omitted. Conclusions tended to be too brief. However, the reduced word limit meant that some candidates were already well over the limit by this stage and so they must be aware of this in the future and allow themselves enough room to develop a sound conclusion.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

It is advisable for teachers to make sure that the topics for both fieldwork and research assignments have a clear, focused aim for which data is readily available. Mmore time should be spent on developing the relevance of sampling methods, going beyond such elements as a appropriate amounts of data and selection methodsto include such things as time of day (critical in a micro-climate study and when interviewing shoppers in an urban area). Also teachers should encourage the use of annotated, large scale maps of the field site rather than computer downloaded, small scale maps that act only as a useful introduction to the general location.

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Statistical tests and graphs need to be used appropriately. Students need more guidance during the course on the benefits and limitations of analysing and presenting data in a specific way.

Higher level paper one

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 5	6 – 11	12 – 15	16 – 21	22 – 27	28 – 33	34 – 50

General comments

This was the second examination of the new syllabus for November session candidates and it was obvious that teaching of the course and preparation for the examination is now consolidated and settled. Overall the performance of the candidates was similar to previous sessions, with the marks again ranging from excellent to disappointedly poor. The average achieved was slightly lower than in the last session, although there was no great difference in the percentage distribution of grades.

There was a pleasing improvement in the performance of candidates in Spanish, with their level of achievement being only slightly lower than their English counterparts.

Feedback from the G2 forms indicated a belief that the examination was similar (or slightly easier) than last year, was of an appropriate level of difficulty and was generally felt to be satisfactory in terms of syllabus coverage, clarity of wording and presentation. Several centres commented, quite rightly, on the lack of links between the different components of the core theme in the questions. This should be regarded as a "one-off" and is unlikely to be repeated in the future.

The levels of knowledge, understanding and skill demonstrated

As always, the stronger candidates showed excellent levels of knowledge and understanding of the components of the core and there appeared to be no element that was universally problematical, although attention is drawn to the annotated map (Question 1 c) – see page 7) and the concept of sustainable management. It was also reassuring to note that there was no individual question that was markedly unpopular; suggesting that syllabus coverage in the teaching of the core has been complete.

It remains a great disappointment that many candidates still seem to be under-performing as a result of not paying sufficient attention to the command words (such as "describe", "explain", "discuss").

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Question 1   **Global distribution of population 1750 – 2000**

a)   *Calculate and describe the changes in the proportion of the total population of the less economically developed regions (Asia, Africa and Latin America) for 1900, 1950 and for 2000.*   *[6 marks]*

b)   *Account for the changes in fertility for **one** of the more economically developed regions (Europe, North America and Oceania) over the period from 1900 to 2000.*   *[7 marks]*

c)   *Using an annotated map, explain how physical and economic factors have affected the distribution of population within a country of your choice.*
     [12 marks]

For the first time, this question based on population was not the most popular, although it still achieved the highest average mark.

Part a) was fairly straightforward, requiring a simple addition of the three values at each stage and a brief description of the changes. However, many candidates simply provided the actual values for each region and made no attempt to calculate their combined values and, as a consequence, lost several marks.

The explanation of the changes in fertility in a more economically developed region was well done, although careless reading of the question (or possibly, attempts to present a prepared answer) led some candidates to write about LEDCs and even about Singapore!

The annotated map showing population distribution (part c)) was very poorly completed and only a handful of candidates scored well in their responses. Maps, generally, were of a very low quality: small, untidy, inaccurate and lacking orientation, location and, in some cases, also any indication of population distribution. Annotations were also rare! Comments added after the map were accepted as "annotations" and were awarded marks, but this would **not** happen again in the future.

Question 2   **Proportion of undernourished people (world hunger map)**

a)   *Describe the distribution of areas that have less than 5 % **and** also areas that have more than 35 % of their population undernourished.*   *[5 marks]*

b)   *Explain the term undernourishment and comment on whether it differs from concepts such as hunger and malnutrition.*   *[5 marks]*

c)   *Using examples, evaluate the importance of internal and external factors that affect the level of food production in less economically developed countries (LEDCs).*   *[15 marks]*

This was the most popular question, although the average mark for it was the lowest.

Despite some justifiable complaints about the shading tones of the map, no candidate seemed to have been disadvantaged in responding to part a). The main pattern was easily identified, but several responses failed to note the anomalies in both groups. Marks were also lost where simple lists of the countries were given.

Some flexibility was shown in the awarding of marks for explanation of the terms undernourishment, hunger and malnutrition, although it was expected that candidates should show an understanding that malnutrition includes obesity.

The longer part c) on the importance of internal and external factors affecting the level of food production produced either very good responses or very weak ones, suggesting that the question was either understood and the candidates had the knowledge and the ability to apply it to the question, or that these elements were absent. In the latter case, very few factors were considered and evaluations could not be made. The stronger responses covered a range of environmental, economic and political factors and were able to provide appropriate and well-developed examples for all.

Question 3   **Fish catches and sustainable management of resources**

a)   *Briefly explain how the diagram suggests that the resource has not been managed sustainably.*   *[5 marks]*

b)   *Briefly explain what is meant by the term sustainable development.*   *[5 marks]*

c)   *Describe the attempts that have been made to manage sustainably a named resource. Discuss the extent to which these attempts have been successful.*   *[15 marks]*

The diagram was easily understood and some excellent responses were given showing how the absence of any management had led to overfishing and the disappearance of some species. Weaker responses tended to describe the changes in the catches, year by year, and failed to identify the trends or to relate them to unsustainable management.

Most candidates were able to explain that the concept of sustainable development involved a level of development that met present needs without compromising the needs of future generations, but failed to develop it further by including, for instance, reference to environmental stability and social justice.

As with question 2 c), the extended response required for the discussion on the sustainable management of a specified resource produced either very good or disappointingly poor answers, with few in between. Much would have depended on the choice of a resource and the knowledge of management schemes, which could have been at any scale from the global to the local. Again, misreading the question led several candidates to write on fish as the resource as this was shown in the diagram.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates
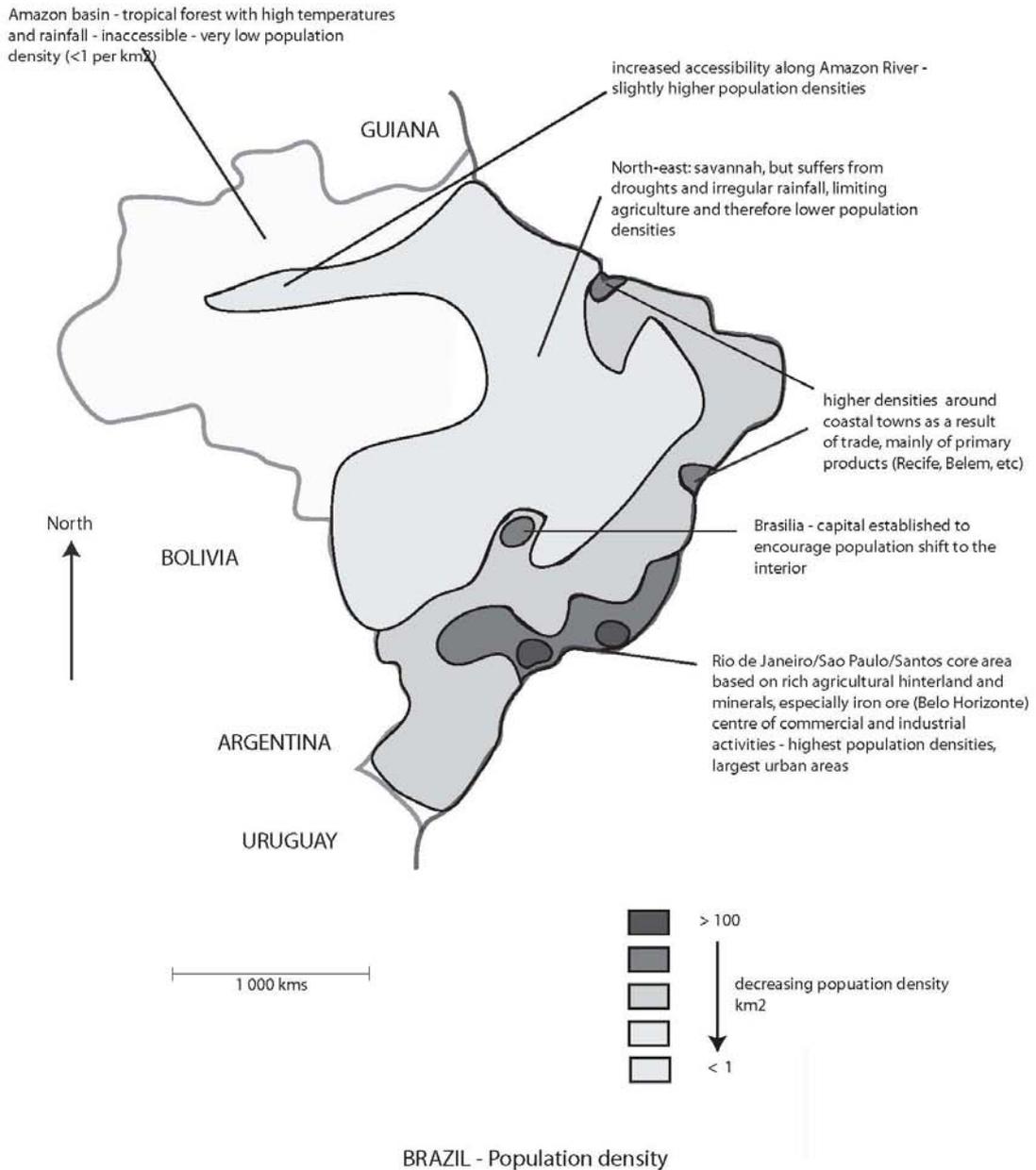
Teaching the course

Some of the comments about the need to provide candidates with a clearer, more accurate appreciation of the world made in the report on the May 2004 examination bear repeating: general geographical knowledge in many cases is weak and candidates often appear to have only a superficial knowledge of the areas or regions they are discussing. Responses are riddled with statements such as "sub-Sahara Africa has a hot, dry climate" – or "suffers from desertification", or "LEDCs have corrupt governments", or "all the farmers are subsistence farmers". Comments such as these are not only inaccurate, but are biased and show a level of ignorance that is unacceptable at this level. As suggested in that report, probably the best way to address this problem is to study three to four countries in depth (including at least one LEDC, one MEDC and a NIC). Such studies would provide candidates with a number of case studies, the knowledge of which could provide them with the necessary hard factual information to support answers to any number of examination questions.

Examination technique

Again, the comments made in the May report are relevant: the biggest change is probably the inclusion of the extended essay-type response and candidates need to practise how to approach such questions. It would be expected that responses should be structured and this implies some degree of planning. Candidates would be well advised to think in terms of classifying the information they wish to include, such as demographic, economic, social, environmental, political or other. The time factor could be a problem. It is worth noting that it is expected that the time spent on any question is directly proportionate to its allocation of marks. Time could also be saved by using diagrams and annotated maps to replace text. Bulleted or numbered points are acceptable, but candidates should be advised that these should be fully developed and not just listed. Practise in interpreting data is recommended. There will always be some diagram, table or map as stimulus material for each question and it is expected that candidates should be able to classify the information shown, identify trends or patterns and note any anomalies. It is also generally expected that descriptions of the data should include some quantification.

Further attention is drawn to the need to ensure that candidates are clear about the meaning and requirements of all the command terms used in the examination.

The annotated map in Question 1 c) proved to be challenging for many candidates who apparently did not know what was meant by "annotation", i.e. the inclusion of comments on the map itself in their relevant locations. An example of an annotated map is shown below.

Amazon basin - tropical forest with high temperatures and rainfall - inaccessible - very low population density (<1 per km2)

increased accessibility along Amazon River - slightly higher population densities

North-east: savannah, but suffers from droughts and irregular rainfall, limiting agriculture and therefore lower population densities

GUIANA

higher densities around coastal towns as a result of trade, mainly of primary products (Recife, Belem, etc)

North

BOLIVIA

Brasilia - capital established to encourage population shift to the interior

Rio de Janeiro/Sao Paulo/Santos core area based on rich agricultural hinterland and minerals, especially iron ore (Belo Horizonte) centre of commercial and industrial activities - highest population densities, largest urban areas

ARGENTINA

URUGUAY

> 100

decreasing popuation density km2

1 000 kms

< 1

BRAZIL - Population density

Higher level paper two

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 10	11 – 20	21 – 28	29 – 37	38 – 45	46 – 54	55 – 80

Standard level paper two

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 5	6 – 10	11 – 14	15 – 18	19 – 23	24 – 27	28 – 40

General comments

Responses from teachers on the G2 forms suggested that this paper was of equal demand to previous ones. However, this was not substantiated out by candidate performance, which had slipped slightly since November 2003. Excellent scripts, where candidates performed well in all questions, were scarce. Very often, the standard was let down by misinterpretation rather than lack of knowledge in one question. Case studies had been well revised and presented in detail, but their application was not always relevant to the question set. Technical skills such as data interpretation, illustration and the structuring of essays were weak. These weak skills depressed marks at all levels.

The areas of the programme and examination that appeared difficult for the candidates

In common with previous examination sessions of this syllabus, very of few candidates attempted questions from sections A5 – Ecosystems and human activity, B7 - Contemporary issues in geographical regions and B9 – Productive activities: aspects of change. The most popular sections were A1 – River basins and their management, A4 – Lithospheric processes and hazards and B8 – Settlements. However, there was no significant match between question popularity and candidate performance.

The majority of candidates completed the required number of questions in the time set, although some HL candidates spent too long on the first two questions at the expense of the later ones. Most candidates within each centre chose questions from the same four options. Those who attempted questions different from those studied in class were usually unsuccessful. At both HL and SL, there was a slight preference for structured questions rather than essays, but there was no significant difference in attainment.

The standard of essay writing ranged from articulate and well structured to disjointed and unplanned. At both HL and SL, candidates were particularly challenged by those essay questions that demanded analytical skills and evaluation. Only a few candidates were able to produce detailed responses relating specifically to the question and supported by relevant case study material. Structured questions involving data were well handled by those who had been trained to identify trends, patterns and anomalies, but in many responses the approach was imprecise and insufficient attention was given to the mark weightings.

The levels of knowledge, understanding and skill demonstrated

Knowledge and understanding of the subject content were usually sound and the best responses were carefully planned to exploit the question fully by viewing the issue from a range of perspectives. For example, fluvial variations in time and space (question 1 b), long-term and short-term consequences (question 3 a) and positive and negative impacts (question 4 a) were well done. Case study knowledge has also improved steadily and was usually applied appropriately to the question. However, comments such as "e.g. Africa" and "people in LEDCs don't use contraception" or other sweeping generalizations were common. Multipurpose examples such as Bangladesh were often over-used when knowledge of more relevant examples was limited. There was also a tendency to associate negative issues and problems only with LEDCs.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Question A1   drainage basins and their management

Essay   *Referring to at least two river basins, discuss the extent to which management schemes create both benefits and problems.*   *[20 marks]*

This was an unpopular question, but marks were relatively high. Those who attempted it produced coherent and well-supported discussions usually focusing on the Mississippi and Snowy Mountain schemes. At SL, candidates who lost marks usually referred to only one drainage basin or dealt with either problems or benefits and not both. A common error in approach was to give an appropriate example of a drainage basin but then consider only very general basin problems and benefits without reference to named areas or places within the basin.

Structured question

This very popular question yielded some disappointing results.

i)   *Evaluate the accuracy of the information shown in the diagram.*   *[6 marks]*

Responses to the statements on the diagram revealed only basic knowledge of fluvial processes and features and few candidates were able to move beyond agreement to evaluation. Relationships between velocity, discharge and the processes of erosion and deposition were often muddled and misplaced. It would appear that a number of schools are still teaching outdated concepts of youth, maturity and old age, which should now be abandoned. Very few candidates understood the implications of increasing discharge and subsequent changes to the hydraulic radius downstream. None mentioned that periodic changes in discharge could alter the processes described in each stage of the diagram.

ii)   *Describe and explain in detail, one typical fluvial landform located at A and one at B.*   *[6 marks]*

Typical landforms were waterfalls at A and meanders and ox-bow lakes at B. In these cases the detail was usually lacking and diagrams were crude and unhelpful.

There were many misconceptions about waterfall formation, the most common being that all waterfalls form solely where rivers flow over cliffs with little attempt to explain processes of differential erosion. Explanation for meanders usually focused on meander enlargement without any reference to earlier formation.

iii)   *Using examples, explain how river basin management at A on the diagram can have consequences for people living near B.*   *[8 marks]*

Many candidates produced responses that were narrowly focused and lacked examples. Popular strategies included dam construction and downstream sediment starvation, but very few considered the wider hydro-political issues involved in shared river basins.

There was also little mention of salinization caused by upstream irrigation schemes and few responses examined the positive effects of soft management through re-afforestation of the upper basin. Several responses wrongly counted unplanned deforestation of upper basin areas a type of planned basin management.

Question 2   Coasts and their management

Essay   *Using examples of contrasting coastlines, evaluate the different types of strategies that may be employed by humans to manage them.*   *[20 marks]*

This was a relatively popular essay chosen by those candidates who had carefully revised their case studies. There were some outstandingly good responses where contrasting coasts were chosen and evaluation was strong. However, many just used two different areas of coast with similar features in different locations. Most candidates attempted to evaluate, but this was often weak.

Structured question

This was a very popular question and candidates, who followed the command terms, applying their knowledge to the information given on the map, were well rewarded.

i)   *Using the map of West Africa, describe and explain the natural processes operating along this section of coastline and the resultant coastal features.*

[6 marks]

A few candidates showed a good understanding of longshore drift and the development of lagoons, spits and bay bars. The weakest simply repeated the information given on the map regarding processes. Little mention was made of the delta and there was some confusion over the identity of the cuspate foreland. Overall, the information given on the map was not fully utilized and opportunities to gain marks were missed.

ii)   *Explain how the action of humans could have altered natural processes operating on this section of coastline.*   *[6 marks]*

Many were able to identify evidence of human interaction on this coastline, although the wording of the question – "could have" – led some to speculate but this was permitted in the mark scheme. At SL, few responses recognized all three factors, namely the Akosombo dam, the jetty at Lome and sand extraction.

iii)   *Using examples, evaluate the various methods that can be used to protect depositional coastlines from erosion.*   *[8 marks]*

Many candidates produced a range of suitable protective techniques and were able to evaluate them. Case study knowledge was generally very good and many candidates now seem very well prepared in terms evaluating a range of coastal management strategies

At SL, a few responses referred to coasts in general and failed to refer exclusively to depositional coastlines.

Question A3   Arid environments and their management

Essay   *Referring to an area of your choice, examine the causes and consequences of desertification.   [20 marks]*

This was a relatively unpopular question with rather disappointing results. Responses tended to be generalized and lacked any depth in understanding the physical processes involved in desertification; in particular those involving atmosphere, soil and vegetation relationships. Some responses confused desertification with land degradation, and gave the Amazon rainforest as a case study. Sometimes, the fully desertified Sahara was used and confused with the Sahel. Causes and consequences were often indistinct and few made reference to longer-term consequences such as migration.

Structured question   i)   *Identify, by naming or describing, three of the landforms shown in the diagram.   [3 marks]*

ii)   *Referring to the diagram, explain the role of water in the formation of the landscape.   [7 marks]*

iii)   *Using examples of your choice, discuss the conflicts that arise from increasing competition for water resources in arid or semi-arid areas.   [10 marks]*

This was not a very popular question. Responses to i) and ii) were mediocre, with very few candidates scoring anywhere near the maximum, due to a failure to use appropriate terminology or display a clear understanding of the vital role of water in arid and semi-arid landscapes. Responses to iii) contained some excellent ideas and material but these were often poorly organized.

Question A4   Lithospheric processes and hazards

Essay   *Explain the variation in distribution, characteristics and impacts of volcanic hazards.   [20 marks]*

This was one of the most popular questions on paper and marks ranged widely. Performance was similar at HL and SL. The best responses showed an understanding of the relationships between plate boundaries, volcanic hazards and characteristics and their impacts. However, weaker responses showed little appreciation of these the links and presented two descriptive case studies of volcanic eruptions in a LEDC and MEDC.

Structured question

i)   *Using evidence provided by the photograph, identify three factors which may have caused this landslide to occur and give reasons in each case. [6 marks]*

This question was well answered and many candidates made valid observations supported by sensible reasoning. However at SL, the causes of the slope failure were often speculative and not related to direct evidence from the photograph.

ii)   *Select two types of weathering and explain how they may contribute to slope instability in general.*   *[6 marks]*

The connections between weathering and mass movement were not fully understood in many cases. Confusion occurred over the meaning of key terms such as "weathering", "erosion" and "mass movements".

iii)   *Explain why the global frequency of hazardous mass movements has increased in recent decades.*   *[8 marks]*

There were some intelligent responses that cited population increase and pressure on land as reasons for increasing mass movements, referring to recent mass movement events. Weaker responses tended to overlook the aspect of "increase" and produced a catalogue of case studies, some of which were out-dated.

Question A5   Ecosystems and human activity

Essay   *Explain how human activity can disturb the equilibrium of an ecosystem and describe the strategies humans can adopt to ensure appropriate management.   [20 marks]*

This was an unpopular question and produced mixed results. On the whole, knowledge was lacking and imprecise generalizations were abundant. Very few candidates named or discussed a specific ecosystem. Those that referred to biomes did so in a general sense without defining the area within the biome affected. In a few cases the responses were based on fieldwork and this was a particularly effective approach.

Structured question

This was a moderately popular question and also produced mixed results.

i)   *Define the following terms: plant succession, pioneer community and climatic climax community.*   *[3 marks]*

ii)   *Using the diagram, explain how plant successions can be affected by natural and human interruptions.*   *[7 marks]*

Most candidates in part i) were able to define the terms and in part ii) understood how successions can be affected by interruptions, but few were able to clearly differentiate between sub-climax and plagio-climax.

iii)   *Referring to a plant succession you have studied, explain the concepts of invasion, competition and dominance.*   *[10 marks]*

This was well done by those candidates who had studied a specific plant succession. The local fieldwork again proved useful to many candidates especially where they were able to link the concepts of invasion, competition and dominance to particular species and locations.

Question A6   Climatic hazards and change

Essay   *Examine the causes of the enhanced greenhouse effect and assess the difficulties in reducing its impacts.*   *[20 marks]*

This was a relatively popular question with a wide range of marks. There were a few accurate and scientific responses but there were also many vague and basic descriptions of the greenhouse mechanism and the associated atmospheric processes. Some failed to distinguish between the greenhouse effect and the enhanced effect produced by human activity. There was further confusion with ozone depletion, acid rain and urban microclimate. Most candidates were able to comment on the ways in which global warming might be controlled, but very few took this further to address the difficulties in overcoming international differences and priorities.

Structured question

This was a relatively unpopular question with disappointing results.

i)   *Describe and account for the temperature differences between points A (CBD) and B (Park) on the diagram.*   *[6 marks]*

Many candidates were unable to give any scientific explanation for the thermal differences within the urban area; references to basic microclimatic features such as air pressure, wind and humidity were rare.

ii)   *Explain how the following might cause variations in the intensity of this city's heat island:*
        a)   *a change in local weather conditions*
        b)   *a different time of day*
        c)   *a different season.*   *[6 marks]*

The term "intensity" was seldom understood and many candidates simply described independent changes in rural and urban temperatures. For example, very few recognized that the urban heat island's intensity was increased in winter as thermal differences between urban and rural areas became more marked. Most candidates for example thought that at night, or in winter, the intensity would be less, as it was cooler.

iii)   *Using examples, describe and explain how human activities (excluding urbanization) can modify microclimates in rural areas.*   *[8 marks]*

Only a few candidates were able to answer this question well, and many used this further opportunity to discuss global warming, ignoring the microclimatic emphasis. Typical responses included erroneous statements about deforestation in the Amazon causing dust and global warming.

Section B

Question B7 **Contemporary issues in geographic regions**

Essay *Using specific examples, examine the problems faced in defining a region. Evaluate the usefulness of the regional concept.* *[20 marks]*

There was only one response, and this appeared to be an unprepared but well reasoned answer.

Structured question i) *Suggest two specific economic activities that the linkages might represent.* *[2 marks]*

ii) *Explain why the regions shown on the map either might or might not be considered functional regions.* *[3 marks]*

iii) *Select a region you have studied. Draw a large, annotated map of this region to locate it and identify its distinguishing characteristics.* *[5 marks]*

iv) *Examine the extent to which the contemporary geographical issues of your chosen region result from its physical geography.* *[10 marks]*

This was attempted by one candidate at SL and one at HL. Neither candidate had an understanding of the concepts involved.

Question B8 **Settlements**

Essay *Using examples, examine the reasons why re-urbanization as opposed to suburbanization has become a common process in some parts of the world.* *[20 marks]*

This essay was done by small minority and produced a few good but many very mediocre results. Only the better responses were able to set the processes of suburbanization and urbanization in an historical context. Many regarded this essay as an opportunity to discuss changes in urban areas and inner-city redevelopment. There was much confusion over the words suburbanization and counterurbanization and discussions moved haphazardly from city centre to suburbs and back again.

No candidates at SL attempted this question.

Structured question

This was the most popular question on the exam paper and there was a wide range of marks.

i) *With reference to the two maps above, describe the shift in the distribution of the world's largest cities between 1900 and 2000.* *[4 marks]*

Many candidates were able to repeat the information given on the map, but without the overview required for four marks. Quite a number did not comment on the latitudinal shift and several responses just described changes in the size of cities. Inadequate phrases such as "above the equator" were common.

ii)   *Give reasons for this shift in distribution.*   *[6 marks]*

At both HL and SL, a number of responses failed to include an historical perspective related to urban growth phases in the developed and developing worlds. Instead, relative increase in the size and number of cities in the less developed world was explained only in terms of recent natural increases in the population on a national scale. Only a minority of candidates appreciated that rapid urbanization in LEDCs resulted from relatively fast natural increase in urban (relative to rural) populations, plus rural to urban migration. Even fewer mentioned the slow-down in natural increase and acceleration of counterurbanization in the MEDCs.

iii)   *Select one environmental, social or economic problem that has arisen in a rapidly growing city. Evaluate the effectiveness of any solutions applied to the problem you have selected.*   *[10 marks]*

The majority of HL and SL candidates selected a city that was currently experiencing rapid growth, while others attempted to fit their prepared example of any city experiencing any urban problem to this question. Poorly selected examples such as air pollution in London were usually self-limiting and lost marks. There were some excellent examples of traffic emissions in Mexico City, but also some long and distressing accounts of life in the "favelas" in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro or an unnamed LEDC city. These tended to be unconvincing due to their lack of specific details and named places within the city.

Question B9   Productive activities: aspects of change

Essay   *The factor of distance is no longer relevant in determining agricultural land-use patterns from the local scale to the global scale. To what extent do you agree with this statement?*   *[20 marks]*

This was a very unpopular question and was attempted by one candidate. Some knowledge was shown, but the essay was neither well structured nor developed.

Structured question

This question was very unpopular but the marks achieved were average.

i)   *Identify three characteristics that show how the economy of the country in 1970 is typical of a LEDC.*   *[3 marks]*

ii)   *Suggest reasons why a country, such as the one shown in the diagram, moved into manufacturing industry so successfully.*   *[5 marks]*

In parts i) and ii) there was appropriate reference to the diagram given but the reasoning tended to be very general and brief.

iii)   *Using specific examples, examine the reasons why companies in the manufacturing sector choose to relocate at an international scale. [12 marks]*

There was some confusion over the word "relocate". In several cases global expansion was discussed instead of global shift. Many drew on their knowledge of globalization and discussed the movement of TNCs from MEDCs to LEDCs citing appropriate reasons.

Question B10 Globalization

Essay   *Mass tourism always brings social and economic benefits to the host population in the countries of destination. Evaluate this statement.*   *[20 marks]*

This was a moderately popular question that was well answered by some candidates. These candidates were able to recognize the distinguishing characteristics of mass tourism (high tourist numbers, heavy impact and the involvement of foreign tourism operators). Credit was also given to those who to recognized that benefits and costs could affect MEDCs as well as LEDCs. The most sophisticated responses, and there were few, considered costs and benefits changing over time. Discussion of environmental problems was irrelevant unless there was some socio-economic outcome.

Structured question

Only only a few candidates attempted this and the results tended to be disappointing. Although cultural goods were defined in the question at both HL and SL, a number of candidates did not appear to understand the concept.

       i)   *Refer to the diagram. Explain why the total value of cultural imports is greater than the combined total values of the "big four" countries (USA, UK, Germany and France) and the LEDCs.*   *[2 marks]*

      ii)   *Describe the trends shown in the diagram.*   *[3 marks]*

The majority had no difficulty in interpreting the graph and explaining the trends in part ii).

      iii)   *Provide an explanation for these trends.*   *[5 marks]*

This part proved to be more challenging and many confused the import of cultural goods with their production. At SL very few were able to explain the trends adequately and simply gave the growth of TNCs as the main reason.

      iv)   *Referring to examples, discuss the positive and negative impacts of imported cultural goods on LEDCs.*   *[10 marks]*

Responses tended to be limited on this section and again, some candidates were confused by the term "cultural". Several considered only negative aspects of cultural goods and dwelt on their morally degenerative effects. At SL, some responses covered only positive and negative impacts of TNCs.

Question C11 Topographical mapping

This was a popular question with only mediocre results. Map skills appeared to be very weak and unpractised.

      a)   *Calculate the area of the map extract in square kilometres.*   *[2 marks]*

For the majority of candidates the calculation of area presented no problems, but they were expected to show their working. Most SL candidates managed this easily. Some very good candidates noticed that the map was not square and adjusted the calculation accordingly.

b)   *State the direction the camera was pointing when the photograph was taken and give some indication of the time of day at which it was taken, briefly justifying your answer.*   *[3 marks]*

This question provoked a wide range of (and sometimes alarming) responses at both HL and SL. The direction that the camera was pointing was a usually given as the south-west, but "towards the ground" or "at an oblique angle" received some credit, if explained. The estimation of time of day proved more challenging. Justification given included high numbers of pedestrians, large numbers of people on the beach, few commuters and other worrying misconceptions such as low tide. Midday to mid-afternoon were the only acceptable times and the justification required needed reference to visible shadows.

c)   *Describe the main relief features of the area and explain the influence they have on communications.*   *[7 marks]*

Responses to this question were generally very poor at both the HL and SL. Some candidates were unclear about the meaning of relief and included vegetation and hydrological features. Grid references, distances and direction were usually missing and responses were vague. At SL most were unable to describe the relief in any detail and therefore attempts to explain its influence on transport were also limited.

d)   *Using only evidence from the map and the photograph, consider the possible town planning problems associated with further urban expansion. [8 marks]*

Many HL candidates were able to recognize one or two features which might restrict the expansion of Tenby, but some eccentric reasons were given such as tsunamis, cold weather to the north of the city and the green belt. At SL there were a number of very good responses that covered a wide range of relevant planning problems caused by the restricted site. A large number of candidates thought that the National Park boundary would be a restriction even though Tenby lies within the park. Further, this is not the case as there is no reason why Tenby should not expand beyond it.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

Teachers should encourage candidates to:

- practice questions and observe time limits

- plan their essays in advance of attempting the question

- learn command terms and use them, directing attention to the significance of key terms such as "discuss", "evaluate", "variation", and "explain"

- incorporate examples into their answers, even when not specifically demanded by the wording of a particular question

- learn recent case studies

- answer only those questions on topics that they have been taught.

- improve the quality of handwriting

- make sure that essay plans are crossed out.