November 2015 subject reports

GEOGRAPHY

Overall grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 13	14 - 27	28 - 43	44 - 52	53 - 62	63 - 72	73 - 100

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 15	16 - 31	32 - 42	43 - 53	54 - 64	65 - 75	76 - 100

Higher and standard level internal assessment

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 3	4 - 7	8 - 12	13 - 16	17 - 20	21 - 24	25 - 30

Recommendations for IB procedures, instructions and forms

In preparation for the eventual upload of internal assessment (IA) work, centres are advised to phase out the use of oversize fold-out diagrams and other non-standard forms of presentation. Candidates are advised to prepare all illustrations to conform with standard paper sizes, continuing to use colour on maps and diagrams wherever necessary for clarity.

While most teachers are now adding marking notes on fieldwork reports, or attaching a marking grid, it is strongly recommended that all teachers do this, in the interests of assistance to both candidates and moderators.

The range and suitability of the work submitted

Candidates presented some very interesting reports, with many centres having arranged excellent fieldwork experiences for their candidates.

A small minority of centres relied on primary data collected via an internet survey or email questionnaires. While this may technically fall close to the boundary of what constitutes primary information (as defined in the syllabus), it is not an acceptable way of ensuring that candidates have undertaken personal fieldwork. Candidates undertaking personal fieldwork are expected to do so outdoors, preferably off the school campus, and meet their sources of information (biotic or abiotic) in a "real life" situation, not via online systems. Among other strengths, this allows candidates to gain a much more valuable appreciation of the surrounding physical and human contexts, and enables them to fully explore unusual responses or findings.

Common topics for fieldwork included: rivers (usually based on the Bradshaw model); coastal studies (though the underlying assumptions were sometimes flawed); leisure, sport and tourism; sustainability; and urban environments (including gentrification; core frame; urban stress; microclimates).

Some centres related their fieldwork to ongoing government initiatives such as education, watershed management or bicycle-friendly policies. Care is needed in such cases to ensure that candidates do not rely too heavily on secondary material. Such material should only play a limited, supporting role, complementing fieldwork.

Candidate performance against each criterion.

Almost all candidates followed the recommended format for presenting the fieldwork report.

Criterion A – Fieldwork question and geographic context

Most candidates scored well for this criterion. The best fieldwork questions had a spatial component and allowed for the findings to be related to existing geographic theory, including any relevant geographic models. Some centres are still encouraging individual candidates to investigate three or more different, unrelated hypotheses; this is not a good idea and often results in a lack of depth in analysis.

A few centres are still undertaking work that lacks a sufficiently clear spatial focus. Teachers should take note of the feedback provided to their particular centre which will highlight any concerns that previous moderators have had. The importance of ensuring that the fieldwork data/information collected allows for some in-depth spatial analysis (including thematic or statistical maps) cannot be overstated.

Geographical context and theory were generally sound but often could have been better linked to the precise fieldwork question. Lengthy quotes from text books or internet sites should not be included. Candidates should precis or paraphrase such material in their own words.

While some candidates made excellent use of Google Maps, adding appropriate annotations to produce high quality locational maps, the standard of locational maps in general is not improving. There is too much reliance on internet-derived maps which lack any annotations or information showing their relationship to the topic being studied. Moderators reported an epidemic this session of maps labelled "not to scale". This is a basic geographic skill. All IB geography candidates should be able to work out (and add) an approximate scale to a map.

Criterion B – Method(s) of investigation

In most cases, methods were described, adequately justified, and yielded sufficient data of good quality to enable adequate interpretation and analysis.

Moderators urge centres to select and discuss methods with candidates beforehand, taking into account the relevant geographic concepts. For example, in the case of questionnaire surveys, the discussion might consider the appropriate variables to be investigated, the appropriate sample size, the choice/selection of respondents, whether to use open or closed questions, and the range of possible answers expected, as well as time and exact locations of the surveys. Some studies developed innovative indices, or modified existing ones (such as Simpson's diversity index), to study such topics as urban ethnicity.

Weaker candidates tended not to provide any justification and also failed to explain the sampling methods used in data collection. Many reports would have been improved if candidates had explained the details of how the sample size and locations were determined.

Annotated photographs and diagrams were often used to good effect to clarify the methods used.

The word 'random' was commonly misused in describing methods. It should be restricted to situations where it involves an appropriate technique such as using random numbers.

The excessive use of tables (presumably in an attempt to circumvent word count restrictions) is not acceptable.

Criterion C – Quality and treatment of information collected

Generally the information collected was relevant and appropriately displayed, with moderators reporting the use of a very wide range of maps, graphs, diagrams, photographs and other illustrations.

Some studies (unfortunately) were based on data that was insufficient in quality or quantity for candidates to be able to make any worthwhile in-depth analysis.

In weaker reports, the range of graphical techniques tended to be very narrow; units were often ignored (or confused), and illustrations failed to include any meaningful keys or titles.

Choosing the appropriate techniques for showing and analysing data will lead to more succinct reports, making it far easier for candidates to see connections and relationships.

The key to successful IA fieldwork is to generate data/information that allows candidates to show their findings on maps. This guarantees a clear spatial focus. An increasing number of candidates are now placing their graphs/data directly onto background maps, making it much easier to visualize comparisons and spatial patterns.

The best reports included some truly outstanding techniques of data treatment and display, such as isopleth and choropleth maps of spatial trends and patterns, annotated photographs and other specialist diagrams (kite, rose) which easily exceeded the demands of the top markband for this criterion.

Many reports also used statistical methods, such as Spearman's Rank Correlation and Chi-squared, effectively. In most cases, the choice of test was appropriate, and the calculations had been performed with accuracy. Statistical tests should not be used when the sample size is insufficient. It is important that candidates check the statistical significance of their findings. Statements such as "There is a very weak correlation" or "There is some limited correlation" usually indicated a lack of understanding of the statistical tests involved.

Criterion D – Written analysis

Many candidates underperformed with respect to this section.

A small number of candidates ignored the requirement to integrate sections C and D, offering instead two entirely separate sections.

The written analysis varied from superficial (mark band 3–4) to very detailed (mark band 9–10). Better candidates wrote perceptive analyses, including valid explanations, and quickly reached the top mark descriptors. They referred confidently to theory and to accompanying graphs and figures. Trends, spatial patterns and any anomalies found were identified, linked and discussed.

Many top range samples used statistical testing very effectively. In the best reports these discussions were associated closely to the specific fieldwork question and the established geographic context.

Weaker candidates tended to resort to simplistic statements and descriptive summaries. Anomalies were quite often ignored, with some candidates openly admitting these odd results were left out of the analysis as they didn't fit the expected results, or they couldn't be fitted on the map. Some weaker reports included multiple pages of raw data in tables but made little reference to the material. In general, weaker reports relied too much on describing the data and paid insufficient attention to offering an objective scientific analysis of the primary data collected.

Criterion E – Conclusion

Most conclusions were concise and consistent with the analysis and the original fieldwork question.

Weaker candidates either wrote conclusions that were overly brief or conclusions that showed little or no connection to their fieldwork findings.

Criterion F – Evaluation

Most candidates are now offering an evaluation of the methods used, usually with some realistic suggestions for improvement. Fewer candidates are considering how the original fieldwork question could have been improved, or how the study could be extended in a meaningful way.

Better candidates were able to suggest ways of improving the study and often showed they have thought deeply about the potential weaknesses implicit in the fieldwork question chosen and/or the methods employed to investigate it.

The limited use of tables in this section is permitted, and can even be effective, provided candidates are aware that all words used will still count towards the word limit.

Criterion G – Formal requirements

Very few reports exceeded the 2,500 word limit, and candidates generally scored well on this criterion. Very few candidates failed to include page numbers, or failed to number and refer to illustrative material. Most candidates provided references for all non-original material.

There is still some uncertainty over the use of appendices. Any material that moderators need to read in order to assess the fieldwork must be in the main body of the report. Material in an appendix should be restricted to essential supporting information, such as a blank copy of any questionnaire used, or the transcript of an interview that is referred to in the main text.

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Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Six-point plan for candidates:

- Personalize maps and illustrations to show the location, choice of topic and/or sample points. Moderators appreciate candidate generated maps, but do expect to see a scale, orientation, key/legend, and relevant details.
- Justify the methods used and explain any sampling method(s) employed.
- Incorporate a variety of appropriate graphical and mapping techniques to show and analyse the results. Label axes on graphs, and take care not to confuse units.
- Apply statistical tests, such as Spearman's Rank Correlation, only in situations where sufficient data has been collected, and always consider the significance of the findings.
- Focus in the analysis on interpreting and explaining (not just describing) results, especially any spatial patterns or trends identified.
- Study the assessment criteria and follow the recommended structure.

Seven-point plan for teachers:

- Introduce the geographic skills listed in the geography guide (pages 15–18) well in advance of undertaking IA fieldwork. Candidates need to be introduced to a wider range of graphical techniques and simple statistical tools.
- Study the feedback to your centre from moderators, as well as the IA section of the subject report published after each examination session.
- Help candidates choose an appropriate fieldwork question, and any related hypothesis or hypotheses. Candidates who are really engaged with the fieldwork do much better than those who are not.
- Ensure that the work has a clear spatial component, and involves collecting data that the candidates can then represent on a map or maps.
- Ensure that ample quantitative data is collected.
- Ensure that candidates are familiar with the assessment criteria, placing particular emphasis on the descriptors at the highest end of the mark range.
- Add comments to all reports explaining why particular marks have been awarded.

Final comments

The extraordinary range of fieldwork topics was impressive, and the general standard of work seen at moderation is improving. The best work seen at moderation is quite excellent and reflects the skills, understanding and knowledge of sound geography. There is plenty of evidence of very good work being done in centres leading to positive cooperation between pupils, systematic organization of material obtained in the field, analytical investigation and professional presentation.

Moderators thank all the teachers and administrators involved for helping candidates undertake fieldwork and to further develop their candidates' skills in researching, processing and interpreting spatial data.

Higher and standard level paper one

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 12	13 - 24	25 - 30	31 - 35	36 - 41	42 - 46	47 - 60

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

On the whole, candidates appeared to find the exam accessible with only a few areas that showed some lack of knowledge and understanding. Probably the most difficult aspect was in being able to illustrate their good ideas with relevant geographical examples and deeper analysis. Some answers lacked full development and only partially covered the question. This was particularly evident in the questions related to gender and biodiversity. In the longer responses the challenge was for candidates to actually answer the question and not use it as opportunity to write down all they knew on an issue. In some cases it seemed as if prepared answers were presented regardless of the actual question and topic being examined. The paper covered a wide area of the syllabus and no particular area stood out as being more difficult than any other.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

There were very few scripts where there was no response to a question and candidates were able to understand the range of command terms and requirements of the questions. Candidates dealt with visual material well and they were able to provide sufficient detail with data to exemplify their response each time. There was evidence of essay planning and most essays were well structured and made use of paragraphs. The questions on populations in transition were very well answered with most scoring well in this section. It was evident that most candidates had been well prepared for this exam.

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

Section A

Question 1

(a)

(i) There were no problems for the vast majority of candidates.

(ii) Again there were no problems with interpreting these types of graphs. At least three statements were seen with accurate reference to the data.

(b) Possible reasons were identified but candidates often struggled to develop them further by means of detail or exemplification. The best responses looked at valid reasons such as quotas whilst very generalized answers such as 'education' or 'development' failed to adequately answer the question. Some candidates struggled to show their knowledge and instead tended to reproduce information from the diagram.

(c) There were mostly good answers based around medical/health reasons; water supply and food security. Reasons were given with explanation/detail. Less successful responses failed to adequately link the reason to falling life expectancy or tended to use two reasons which were not distinct from one another.

Question 2

(a) There was some minor confusion with the two sets of values on the graph. Most managed to group the regions using appropriate values to justify these. Some tried to explain the variation when only description was required and/or included details of aid per person which was not required. Weak candidates gave a vague and simple list where variation was not described and reference to the data was poor.

(b) Most candidates made reference to corruption and numbers of people living in poverty and were able to develop the ideas with geographical detail.

(c) Some answers did not demonstrate an accurate understanding of what remittances are. Some looked at the benefits of remittances as a tool in reducing disparities. This was unfortunately not the question and so such answers were self-limiting. The best answers answered the question posed and also used specific geographical examples such as Mexico or Tajikistan to illustrate their key points.

Question 3

(a) A small minority got this wrong.

(b) Most answers referred to the data and described the trend with some accuracy, although sometimes this was not done clearly. It is important to teach candidates how to structure short question answers. There were some attempts to explain the data which received no extra credit.

(c) This was one of the questions where candidates struggled the most as they seemed to find it very difficult to link their responses with the concept of biodiversity. Most candidates could pick up three of the six marks by very general accounts of reasons why it is important to preserve tropical rainforests (for example, ecological benefit, attractive for tourism) but the mark for a specific link to how this is related to preserving biodiversity was often missed.

Question 4

(a) This was done easily.

(b) Most answers described the positive relationship and included other valid descriptions with reference to the data.

(c) Some answers failed to identify why country A did not fit the trend. There were many responses with valid reasons for the anomaly, for example, sustainable government policies, use of renewables, reference to Kuznets curve, recycling reducing waste. There was evidence that most candidates had a sound understanding of the ecological footprint.

(d) There was a lot of confusion in many responses between recycling and reuse. Recycling was often described as reusing a resource rather than reprocessing the used material to make new items/products. Resource substitution was more accurately defined. It was essential for the candidates to illustrate their answers with precise examples.

Section B

Question 5

Many candidates managed to discuss the costs and benefits of falling fertility but many failed to effectively link it to increased or reduced resource consumption. This would have been done very effectively if per capita consumption had been addressed, which tends to increase as fertility decreases as a factor of economic and social development. The best responses identified other reasons why falling fertility makes little difference to resource consumption, such as population momentum or ageing populations. A few candidates struggled to answer the question and described population policies or the neo-Malthusian versus anti-Malthusian argument instead.

Question 6

This was the least popular of the three questions and there were some unusual interpretations of global climate change which included reference to geophysical events such as earthquakes. The best answers contained accurate knowledge and understanding of the consequences of global climate change (sea level rises, flooding, droughts, storms, spatial spread of pests, shifts in climate belts) and could see some advantages (shift of agriculture as permafrost may melt) and disadvantages (more extreme climate hazards). The best responses contained very clear examples and case studies with some interesting analysis/evaluation of disparities in wealth and development. Good candidates were able to present developed answers that covered most aspects of the question. Unfortunately there were many responses that discussed climate change but struggled to link it to the increase of reduction of disparities.

Question 7

Many of the responses to this question were balanced and came up with the high cost as a limitation for the development of sustainable sources of energy but recognized that there were also successful schemes taking place in low- and middle-income countries. At the bottom end some candidates just described the advantages and disadvantages of some renewable sources

of energy instead of answering the question. The best answers demonstrated accurate knowledge and understanding of different sustainable energies; examples and case studies were well chosen from various parts of the world. These responses revealed a clear understanding that changing to sustainable sources of energy implies significant economic costs and utilization of geographical advantages. Some saw low-income countries endowed with sustainable potential for example solar in Sahel regions (Morocco, Mauritania); HEP in Swaziland; these answers could show evaluation of the issue with appropriate application.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

Make sure the candidates take time to read the questions and understand them. Some candidates rush and do not manage to answer what the question is asking for. Avoid "set piece" essay styles which require specific questions being asked in the exam; candidates must try to adapt, in a fresh way, their knowledge and ideas to the questions as set. Candidates should have greater clarity about what constitutes a low-, middle- and high-income country by utilizing the World Bank's classifications. For short answer questions, quantifications in answers must be provided, using the data in order to get full marks. Candidates are to be advised that essay questions should have a proper structure which demonstrates the candidate's analytical skills, supported by appropriate examples and facts. Ensure that throughout the course of study the candidates are exposed to plenty of specific and contemporary geographical case studies/examples.

Further comments

This was a good set of candidates with some very strong scripts. Candidates should not be encouraged to draw extra lines on the answer pages. Responses need to be kept to a minimum but include all relevant facts or points. When a question asks for two points (for example) some candidates add extra ones for which no credit can be given; only the first two are assessed.

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Higher and standard level paper two

Component grade boundaries

Higher Level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 6	7 - 12	13 - 22	23 - 27	28 - 33	34 - 38	39 - 60

Standard Level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 5	6-10	11-14	15-19	20-23	24-28	29-40

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

Definitions and knowledge of geographical terminology were a significant issue, for example, famine, disaster, subaerial processes, types of diffusion, demographic.

Some candidates struggled to use the command term correctly: for example, explaining rather than describing. Some candidates did not read the questions carefully. As a result some responses did not answer the question or contained information that was superficial.

Map reading skills were often poor, for example, using basic grid references, and the ability to discuss and evaluate a question was often weak. Candidates should be able to consider both sides of an argument.

Furthermore, in part (b) of each question rarely did candidates score the full marks because either they did not use examples in support or did not give explanations and develop an answer.

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The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

Generally, essays were well structured and many candidates wrote good introductions to the essay question in which they defined terms and attempted to unpack the question.

Terminology was improved compared with previous sessions and case studies and examples were often well developed, showing a good level of knowledge and understanding.

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

Question 1

(a) Salinization, eutrophication and groundwater depletion were the main problems stated, and generally there were few problems in giving the outline required. However, some candidates tried to use problems that were already stated on the diagram.

(b) International conflict as a topic caused a few problems. Too many tried to use the Aswan Dam on the River Nile but were incorrect in their geography as there are no countries downstream of the Aswan Dam in Egypt. Generally there was a lack of development/confusion with the consequences of a named conflict. A good answer was exemplified, for example, by the conflict over the paper pulp mills in the River Plate region. An incorrect approach was to use the example of Bolivia's water privatization plan to a foreign company.

It is worth noting that some candidates had an incorrect idea of where the Nile flows, many having it stretch to western Africa and even Bangladesh.

(c) This relatively easy question tended to need more in-depth explanation of the two causes. Most could describe factors but very few attempted to weigh up the factors and conclude which was most important.

The most frequently used examples were Bangladesh and the Mississippi.

Unfortunately, some candidates referred to the example of the building of dams and its impact as opposed to a river actually flooding.

Question 2

(a) (i) This was satisfactorily done.

(a)(ii) Many had no idea about artificial recharge.

(b) A very straightforward question which allowed most to showcase their knowledge of human modifications. Dams were not credited as they are not constructed on the floodplain.

(c) Many focused on the strategies of resolving water usage or the general management of basin rather than resolving competing demands. In many instances the demands were rather superficial. Some had not learnt a case study, which made this difficult to answer.

Question 3

(a) Candidates found it reasonably difficult to identify two coastal landforms but those who could often did not describe the feature and included long-winded explanations about their formation.

(b) Reasons for the movement of ocean pollution was poorly answered. Most could name an example but failed to develop the answer.

(c) The term "subaerial" was largely ignored by candidates. Those who tried to use it limited the process to the action of wind. Most were able to write an explanation of landforms caused by wave action but failed to address the command term "evaluate". Overall it was a poorly answered question even just on the wave part.

Question 4

(a) Most were able to find at least one feature relating to the photograph and an advancing coast. The development of the statement tended to be weak.

(b) Ocean trenches and their formation was reasonably well done by some, but many had no idea and either missed this part out or wrote about ocean rifts.

(c) Conflicts over the use of coastal areas should have looked at competing land uses and potential conflicts. Too many wrote about oceanic/geopolitical issues, which were credited but at a low markband. There were some good attempts at this question with explanation and solutions/strategies outlined, using detailed examples and diagrams.

Question 5

(a) Generally there were no problems with describing changes.

(b) This was well answered and the majority were well prepared on the depositional landforms. Weaker candidates described glacial erosional features.

(c) Some very descriptive and long-winded accounts were presented for this question. Often this was only focused on one location or one agricultural type rather than discussing with examples.

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Question 6

(a) Despite this seeming an easy question, many did not get full marks as they failed to relate the adaptions to the environment (cold or extreme cold was not enough to get a mark).

(b) The question was looking for causes relating to location of the hot, arid areas, for example, rain shadow, Hadley Cells. There were some very comprehensive answers but weaker candidates tried to link the causes to evapotranspiration and absence of vegetation.

(c) A straightforward question with many able to show environmental impacts in one named extreme environment. The responses on mountain ranges and deserts were fine but some responses on Antarctica were very generalized and often confused with polar bears and eroding glaciers. It is useful to emphasize here that tropical rainforests are not in the extreme environments part of the syllabus and as such were not credited.

Question 7

(a) This was generally well answered with the necessary quantification given.

(b)(i) Reasonable responses were given although the further development needed for the full three marks was often not extensive enough. There is still much confusion over the meaning of demographic; many wrote about location.

(b)(ii) This was answered better than part (i) and most candidates were able to relate their answers to the wealth and education of a place.

(c) There was a tendency to describe past events and then simply say things should be improved. Strategies were descriptive and there was little emphasis on contrasting these.

Question 8

(a)(i) Most candidates received full marks here. The Richter scale for earthquakes was the most popular.

(a)(ii) Most candidates made reference to outside help.

(b)(i) Most had some knowledge here but failed to get full marks by not providing further development.

(b)(ii) Not very well answered, with some very vague comments included. Some had an example (Hawaii) but little understanding. Quite a few candidates wrote that you can feel waves from earthquake at the margins rather than the earthquake occurring there. Quite a few wrote about another plate boundary. Some stated earthquakes/volcanoes can only be found at plate boundary.

(c) This was generally answered quite well although many wrote about impacts of hazards, reasons for hazard and preparation strategies. Unfortunately there were some that asserted that earthquakes can be predicted.

Question 9

Question 9 was generally not answered well.

(a) This was well answered with most gaining 3 out of the 4 marks. Most provided quantification and noted that all decreased over time, and that those with higher income had more participation.

(b)(i) This was not very well answered. Answers did not always refer to participation in sport, and some candidates looked at success in sports.

(b)(ii) This was poorly understood with a few generic responses.

c. There were some good answers where candidates had detailed knowledge of an urban area and included a sketch map. However, too many answers gave more of an "urban" response, where candidates explained land values within the city. Some responses had barely any reference to recreation or sports facilities.

Question 10

(a)(i) This was a "describe" question and many were able to identify a trend. Too many attempted to explain the data.

(a)(ii) Well answered, but again some were trying to explain the trend.

(b) This was generally well answered although sometimes there was a failure to include examples.

(c) Generally good. Some responses were a bit generalized but most answered the question. Economic gains were better known than social impacts. Too many tried to incorporate environmental impacts which were not linked to people's wealth or quality of life. Case studies were well used. Vietnam and Venice were popular examples used.

Question 11

(a)(i) Almost all candidates identified child stunting as the category.

(a)(ii) Very few candidates were able to describe how this affects an individual.

(b) The meaning of the term "famine" was not well known.

(c) Most knew the term "energy efficiency ratio" but few could relate it to a type of agricultural system,.

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(d) There were some quite good responses, linking safe water and health, and identifying the importance of other factors. Generally candidates were better at listing alternative measures than explaining the connection between safe water and health.

Question 12

(a)(i) and (ii) The majority of answers were correct.

(a)(iii) Very few correctly identified the grid square 1419 and some candidates also failed to notice that the question asked for "why" the flu outbreak started there, that is, there was a port or marina.

(b) There were some pleasing responses in this part but most failed to give enough detail as to how/why the flu spread to the outlying areas. Too many tried to link the flu to being carried by water or wind.

(c) The concept of food security was clearly known and there were some sound responses. Weaknesses were that answers concentrated on countries and famine rather than communities and food security.

Question 13

(a) There was a tendency to read into the photo things that were not there (no shoes, poor people, dirty street), that is, characteristics of the informal sector were stated but evidence from the photograph was not provided. Too many candidates gave four descriptions rather than identifying the required two and outlining them.

(b) Many candidates struggled to explain more than one factor influencing the location of megacities. Weaknesses included not naming an example, or using cities that are not classified as megacities. Overall this question was not well understood.

(c) There were some reasonable answers and the concept of sustainability seemed to have been taught well. Responses, however, on the whole tended to be too descriptive and few discussed the statement with any validity. Curitiba was often cited as the model sustainable city.

Question 14

This question was not well answered.

(a)(i) The definition was not well known.

(a)(ii) This was not well answered as many confused the urban area with the CBD or did not refer to population change.

(b) The details of air pollution were not well known. Carbon dioxide was the gas most quoted. Many ignored the scale <u>urban</u> and talked about global issues. There was a tendency to be generalized in which many responses stated cars and factories and a city but no more. The urban heat island cropped up in quite a few answers.

(c) There were some very mixed responses in this part. There were some excellent answers which referred to known cities with a detailed sketch map with named locations. However there were also a lot of very general comments with no named locations which tended to be superficial.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

Teachers are recommended to:
- Read the subject reports for the previous sessions which are published on the OCC.
- Ensure there is adequate coverage of all the learning outcomes in the syllabus.
- Ensure that relevant regions are studied, for example, the tropical rainforest is not acceptable as an extreme environment; floods, wild fires and tornadoes are not included in the hazards option.
- Ensure that candidates know the precise definitions and terms from the IB geography guide.
- Emphasize that if the candidates give more points or examples than are asked for, only the first ones given, up to the number indicated in the question will be marked, even if the extra ones are correct.
- Brief the candidates about the need to ensure that they fill in the cover booklet sheets and the question boxes correctly.
- Emphasise to candidates that part (c) of a question is never a continuation of the parts (a) and (b); and that part (b) is only linked to (a) if it is so stated in the examination paper.
- Use current, up-to-date examples.

Candidates are recommended to:
- Learn the definitions given in the IB geography syllabus.
- Create a glossary of unknown words, for example, demographic, ocean trench, diffusion.
- Continue to practise map skills, especially the use of grid references.
- Practice improving the 10-mark questions to include evaluation, a conclusion and more than one point of view (if applicable).
- Continue to improve their skills of description of patterns or distributions, rather than merely listing locations.
- When an answer asks for one cause and two consequences (for example), ensure that the answer clearly deals with these two parts separately and does not mix them up.
- Ensure that answers to a 6-mark question are fully developed.
- Pay attention to the wording of the question so as not to answer at the wrong scale, or the wrong location (for example, countries/cities).
- Use well drawn diagrams and maps.
- Avoid generalizations, for example, Bangladesh is urbanized.
- Remember that if a question asks for two reasons/factors (for example) then only the first two given will be marked.
- Be clear on the number of questions to be answered.
- Clearly number the questions answered.

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Higher level paper three

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 3	4 - 7	8 - 12	13 - 14	15 - 16	17 - 18	19 - 25

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

Anti-globalization groups, globalized production, loss of sovereignty and, in some cases, diaspora were concepts that were clearly not familiar to all candidates, despite being crucial to paper three.

Although many candidates managed to find reasons for anti-globalization sentiments in 1b, many neglected the spatial component of the question implied by 'most countries' and very few managed to identify actual groups or movements.

Many responses managed to identify benefits of globalized production (in question 2a) such as job opportunities or cheaper goods. Nevertheless, there were many others that insisted on articulating the benefits of globalized production for the TNCs themselves, which was not asked for. Many candidates failed to demonstrate an understanding of globalized production and even local societies.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

The concept of globalization (including its social, economic and technological aspects), financial flows, environmental sustainability, were topic areas where many candidates managed to excel.

Many responses managed to identify both direct and indirect flows and different types of influence (in 1a).

Many candidates managed to produce fully synthetic responses to question 2b while also identifying both sides of the argument (taking the view that the growth of globalization might cause more awareness and technical fixes in addition to causing environmental harm).

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

Question 1

(a) This question targeted sub-topic 3 of the geography guide: economic interactions and flows. As befits an AO2 task, application of knowledge was required rather than recall of knowledge alone. The question therefore asked candidates to analyse how the varied financial flows they had studied were affected by government action. Good responses focused upon the political regulations, actions or priorities that may or may not influence flows of development aid, remittances, foreign investment and profit repatriation. In-depth knowledge of governance was not required and candidates scored highly by demonstrating understanding that a wide variety of flows exist which could potentially be controlled. Some of the best answers thoughtfully acknowledged that control of financial flows could be hard to achieve due to the ways money can be transferred electronically or smuggled between places. A few candidates considered how the actions of some governments may lead to other governments imposing sanctions on them, thereby restricting financial flows (Russia was used as an example).

(b) The best answers were a pleasure to read: candidates thoughtfully discussed the way that different facets of globalization can lead to different issues-based protests arising in different contexts. Anti-immigration movements in Western Europe were contrasted with internet censorship in China, for instance. The syllabus requires candidates to have studied anti-globalization movements and the resurgence of nationalism in some depth; it was therefore expected that candidates achieving the highest marks would be able to make some reference to actual named movements/groups as opposed to entirely generic answers. Popular case studies included the Occupy movement, the UK's UKIP party, France's National Front and supporters of the Bolivian government. Some excellent answers took the view that Nigeria's Boko Haram and Daesh (or so-called Islamic State) are anti-globalization movements in some respects and wrote in an informed manner about this. In contrast, weaker candidates sometimes produced a somewhat rehearsed response to a slightly different question, along the lines of: 'Discuss the negative consequences of globalization'. Having explained how globalization promotes pollution, cultural homogeneity and exploitation of workers, they concluded by asserting that these things should be campaigned against generally.

Question 2

(a) Inevitably, there was a wide interpretation of what 'local' meant. The best answers were explicitly localized and used examples of, for example, villages in Pakistan making footballs for global consumption under the fair trade umbrella. Weaker responses asserted that 'local societies everywhere' can now enjoy strawberries or other fruit at all times of the year. There were frequently-heard claims too that McDonald's has brought consumer choice to 'local societies everywhere'. These more generic benefits were credited, but often failed to meet the criteria required for the higher bands. Some answers analysed the way in which global markets have allowed TNCs headquartered in particular places to develop economies of scale. Some went even further, noting that the lower prices of goods which can result from mass production can benefit groups of consumers everywhere, especially in places where living costs are high or incomes are low. While the 'local' focus here was sometimes less clear in this line of

approach, the theoretical and spatial sophistication was good to see. A significant number of candidates of varying ability wrote, often at great length, about the disadvantages of globalized production for local societies; but such content was not creditable.

(b) More than any other, this question triggered a by-now recognizable 'patchwork' answer consisting of three themes: carbon footprint growth (negative), e-waste issues (negative) and the work of Greenpeace (positive). Examiners reported seeing many candidates take this approach, typically resulting in a low band D outcome provided the studies were factual and the balance between positive and negative effects sufficient to meet the AO3 criteria for this question. A common weakness amongst these 'patchwork' answers was a superficial understanding of the role globalization has actually played in the development of these issues. A mid-ability candidate is likely to assert than globalization leads to the production of e-waste and then proceeds to explain why e-waste is environmentally harmful. Whereas a higher-ability candidate explains how and why globalization is responsible for e-waste. For instance, the links between globalization, poverty reduction and increasing consumption of electronic goods in emerging economies is one possible argument that could be applied in this context. High-scoring candidates who reached the top of band D or band E were far more likely to take this approach and to establish links between globalization and the growth of 'throwaway' or aspirational consumer culture on a global scale.

Question 3

(a) The phrase 'loss of sovereignty' refers firstly to the growth of multi-governmental organizations and secondly to the changing power balance between TNCs and some nation states. Coverage of these two themes was sufficient for the award of full marks. Candidates were also credited for the use of additional themes, such as the powerlessness of states to sometimes control global flows of people and information in a 'shrinking world'. The best answers were richly illustrated and theoretically-informed, making good use of terminology. Typically, weaker responses were highly generalized and asserted that cultural globalization (alternatively viewed as 'Westernization') is transforming the planet in ways that all governments cannot control, and in ways which threaten 'national culture' (applied in this context as a proxy for sovereignty). This view is only partially correct given the rise in nationalist movements and recent moves made by many states towards stricter controls on migration or internet use. Better answers were typically more nuanced and critical in the way they dealt with these 'hyperglobal' themes and the implications for sovereign states in terms of the integrity of their national cultures and cultural landscapes.

(b) This question asked candidates, firstly, to apply the breadth of their knowledge of global interactions to the topic of diaspora. Secondly, as an AO3 task, there was an expectation that good answers might examine possible interrelations between the political, technological and economic factors that were specified. Few candidates were able to do the latter. Most were, however, able to explain how each of the three factors could play a role in diaspora growth. Sadly, too many responses focused solely on migration flows between source and destination countries (such as Mexico and the USA). Only a handful of candidates wrote explicitly about diffused global patterns of migration giving rise to diaspora. An effective example would have been migration within the European Union. There, freedom of movement (a political factor) has given rise to multiple diaspora (Polish or French citizens have migrated to multiple destinations, for instance). In turn, technological and economic factors determine the precise patterns that

have developed: transport networks and local job markets have shaped the distribution. This is a good example of how the factors are interrelated and provides a good illustration of the treatment of content that is, ideally, required for a band E mark.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

Further work needs to be done helping mid-ability candidates to work towards creating a more substantial final evaluation of their chosen argument or topic.

Teachers should ensure the candidates learn enough evidence to develop thorough answers through case studies and examples.

Further comments

Overall, the content of the course, and the nature of the assessment, are both much better understood than in 2011. The integration of current affairs relevant to global interactions is occurring in the answers of the best candidates. This shows that the geography course remains dynamic, relevant and interesting to both teachers and candidates. There are now far fewer teachers writing in their feedback that the topics are too difficult for candidates at this level (as happened when the current assessment was first introduced).

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