

## SOCIAL & CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

### Overall grade boundaries

#### Higher level

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 13	14 - 28	29 - 42	43 - 54	55 - 65	66 - 77	78 - 100

#### Standard level

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 12	13 - 27	28 - 41	42 - 54	55 - 67	68 - 80	81 - 100

### Higher level internal assessment

#### Component grade boundaries

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 3	4 - 7	8 - 10	11 - 12	13 - 14	15 - 16	17 - 20

### The range and suitability of the work submitted

The trend seen first in the November 2007 session and continued in 2008 is still in evidence, many candidates presented appropriate and well-focused topics rather than poorly focused ones, and there were few inappropriate topics presented. Centres varied not so much in overall performance as in their relative strengths and weaknesses, as will be more specifically addressed under B, below.

The great majority of candidates not only presented focused research questions, but also chose research contexts that were familiar and easily accessible to them. In some centres it was usual to choose some aspect of centre experience as the research context (for example: dining hall behaviour, “old girl-new girl” relationships, and gender relations among students).

### Candidate performance against each criterion

#### Criterion A: Identification of an issue or question

As mentioned above, candidates chose appropriate and well-focused research issues or questions. There were few examples of group work offered in this session.

**Criterion B: Presentation of data**

The great majority of candidates chose appropriate research techniques, although there was considerable variation in the extent to which they achieved a balanced presentation between the two research techniques chosen. Candidates from several centres demonstrated a strong concern with research methodology, which served them especially well under Criterion D. However, this concern with methodology sometimes became “top heavy”, with the result that while candidates’ research techniques were well chosen and critiqued, their data presentation suffered somewhat from a lack of detail. In a few cases methodological discussions were overly general, and even hypothetical, with little relevance to how research techniques were actually applied to data by the candidate. In a few cases, appendices were used to present data which should have been presented in the text of the report. A small number of reports presented no data at all.

**Criterion C: Interpretation of data**

Although some reports satisfied the requirement of this criteria, to provide at least “general support related to the question or issue identified”, there was marked variation in performance among centres. Clearly, the ability to interpret data effectively depends to a considerable extent on the quality of data gathered. As more than one moderator noted, candidates who realized their data was not adequate to support their research questions, were sometimes able to do reasonably well under this criterion. However, the lack of a consistently anthropological approach, or an uncritical approach to the limitations of data meant that many candidates received little or no credit under this criterion as did moderately well or very well. It was rare that candidates applied an appropriate analytical framework.

**Criterion D: Justification, comparison and critical evaluation**

Performance under this complex criterion has shown improvement in recent examination sessions. A strong majority of candidates gained substantial credit for justifying, comparing and evaluating their research techniques, although few, if any, received full credit. To fully accomplish the aims of the criterion, candidates are expected to evaluate their research techniques both in relation to the type of data gathered, and in relation to the issue or topic chosen. Accomplishing all this continues to be a very difficult task for candidates. Teachers should note that the tasks identified in this criterion will be somewhat differently assessed under new HL IA criteria, as presented in the Subject Guide for first examinations in 2010.

**Criterion E: Personal experience and ethical issues**

This was another criterion under which performance varied markedly among centres. It is clear that some centres have invested significant effort in sensitizing candidates to the ethical implications of any research involving human subjects. Moderators have pointed out that combining a sense of ethical practice with a self-critical examination of practical issues in data gathering remains a difficult task for candidates.

**Criterion F: Anthropological insight and imagination**

Performance under this criterion continues to show the improvement noted in previous sessions, with a larger number of candidates receiving full marks as receiving none, and the great majority receiving at least some credit. Obviously, candidates must have asked

anthropologically valid and well-focused questions to demonstrate “anthropological insight” and must have some sense of what constitutes anthropological analysis of data. As moderators noted, stronger candidates showed their awareness of anthropological practice as reflected in the ethnographic material they presented as relevant to their own projects. It should now be noted that this criterion will have one more mark added to the maximum obtainable under new IA criteria.

## Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

It is once again gratifying to suggest that many centres are making some progress in guiding their candidates in the choice of suitable topics, and in the difficult initial task of narrowly focusing their research questions. This session and the November 2009 sessions will be the last to be examined under the 2002 programme. In preparation for next year’s candidates, teachers should familiarize themselves with the changes made to Internal Assessment as set forth in the Subject Guide for first examinations in 2010, and should consult the new Teacher Support Materials publication, which presents examples of IA work marked and evaluated according to the new criteria. Teachers may also avail themselves of the helpful advice from experienced teachers through the Online Curriculum Centre’s (OCC) discussion forum for this subject.

There remains considerable room for improvement in applying anthropological theory to the construction of analytical framework for interpreting and analysing data. Consulting the IB materials referred to above would also aid teachers in helping candidates choose analytical frameworks. It should be mentioned here that for 2010 the IA HL criterion addressing interpretation and analysis explicitly calls for candidates to present an “analytical framework” if they are to receive more than one mark, and that criterion has had another mark added to its potential value.

Short periodical articles, available in topical anthologies or readers, or in ethnographies, may also offer useful models for designing well-focused research projects. Further, the OCC forum for the subject offers notes on relevant references works in the Curriculum Resources list which discuss research methods, most of them specifically designed for candidate research projects. Also, candidate research and discussions of IA guidelines and criteria are often featured on the OCC discussion forums.

Reading short extracts or passages from handbooks on research methods or ethnographic texts on ethical issues and personal experiences will aid candidates in approaching a critique of their own research experience, and thus improve performance under this criterion.

As was noted above, candidates often did not produce a balanced treatment of their research techniques. It was sometime evident that a candidate relied almost entirely on one technique, or that the two techniques presented were hard to distinguish in practice (for example, some presented two different types of questionnaires, with “open-ended” and “closed” questions). In these circumstances, candidates will not do well on the “research techniques” criterion (new Criterion B), or on the “presentation of data” criterion (new Criterion C). Care should be taken that candidates understand just what “field research techniques” are, and that the techniques chosen be well-differentiated.

## Standard level internal assessment

### Component grade boundaries

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 3	4 - 6	7 - 9	10 - 11	12 - 14	15 - 16	17 - 20

### The range and suitability of the work submitted

There has been a steady improvement in the quality of the SL IA since its introduction in 2002. Candidates are by in large being competently instructed to observe and record social interaction for one hour and after six months guided to reflect on their experience, now with a better understanding of anthropological method. Previously, many candidates attempted participation observation and interviewing, which defeats the purpose of this particular exercise. Only a few candidates still make these unauthorized additions to their fieldwork.

Some centres are preparing candidates more thoroughly to cope with the complexity of observing and interpreting data and this makes for insightful and reflective Reports and Critiques. Others appear to focus more on the formal aspects of the process, which gives less depth to candidate's work.

The Report continues to be the most successfully executed part of the IA. Many Critiques were marred by a lack of understanding of the Criteria, especially Criterion C on the difference between description and analysis, and the mistaken notion that the purpose of the Critique is to correct or improve the Report.

### Candidate performance against each criterion

#### Criterion A: Completion of the written report

The large majority of candidates produced interesting and appropriate observations. In some cases, candidates struggled with the scope of the context or were engaged in other activities that may have distracted from the research. Having coffee with friends or actively working within the context hindered some candidates' abilities to fulfil the exercise. Observation, not participant observation or interview, is the required field technique for this component. A few candidates seemed to base their reports on prior knowledge of a setting rather than a fresh observation, making it difficult to later critique their reports since they did not have the actual fieldwork experience.

There is consistently more detailed description in the Reports and fewer candidates are using mere bullet points and time lines as an organizing principle. This has added more depth to the Reports and given adequate information to critique. Most settings are now being contextualized in terms of time and place. Both are positive trends.

Many observations are based on constantly shifting populations in shopping malls or fast food restaurants. Some of these context based observations were successfully critiqued but candidates were often left with a superficial list of people (family of four, some teenage girls)

making it difficult to analyse. Those candidates who looked for patterns of behaviour or added an issue such as group or gender dynamics had more to work with in the Critique.

In the case of some centres, candidates observed for longer than one hour, and in a few cases over the course of more than one day. Some centres are allowing candidates to go over the word limit. Besides the formal problem here, there is the issue of selection. Many candidates did not seem to be aware of the implications of focus and choice. One hour gives a limited framework that can open opportunities to discuss the careful thought that goes into choosing data for the Report.

### **Criterion B: Focus of the observation**

There are still many candidates who take the wording of this Criterion literally to mean the actual position of the observer rather than one's position as a particular person who gleans certain information from a specific observation. Few showed a self-understanding needed to grasp the implications of one's position. Some candidates focused on physical rather than social position.

Those who were aware of this distinction recognized that their gender, age and ethnic background influenced their position as an observer; that we are not necessarily neutral when we observe and that we therefore interpret what we see based on our experiences.

### **Criterion C: Description and analysis**

Again this year, Criteria C proved the most difficult for candidates. Many seem unaware of the meaning of the terminology itself and the ideas behind considering analysis in relation to description. It has become more common to refer to the wording of the Criterion C (descriptive inference and sound analysis) but often with no examples or discussion. It is thus unclear whether the candidate has understood the meaning behind the words used. Differences in levels of competence here seem to be a matter of instruction rather than ability.

It is clear that in some centres candidates have been given the proper conceptual tools to deal with this requirement and others have not. Simply quoting the criteria without relevant examples is not enough to warrant better marks.

### **Criterion D: Assumptions, judgments and bias**

Finding bias and assumptions was sometimes the sole focus of Critiques, often to the detriment of other criteria, which were largely overlooked in some cases. Most candidates do have a good grasp of what constitutes bias and judgmental attitude and could give clear examples from their Reports.

Overall critical discussion related to this criterion was superficial. However, greater self-awareness was needed by most candidates to recognize where their views originated and how that affects their Reports. Some candidates may benefit from considering that their assumption of kinship relationships among people may be a social bias. As are assumptions involved in categorizing people as "typical" or "average".

It was in relation to judgment and bias that many candidates felt the need to correct or improve their Reports. It is not a mistake to be judgmental, especially considering candidates have had only a month of anthropological instruction. The mistake lies in not recognizing and discussing bias.

**Criterion E: Critical reflection**

Most candidates critically discussed their reports and some showed a good understanding of anthropological issues. However, most candidates overlooked basic methodological issues such as the ethics of observing without permission and issues of selectivity.

As mentioned above, too many candidates evaluated their Report by correcting perceived mistakes or adding further information from the initial observation, neither of which is an actual critique.

While it can be interesting to discuss the observation in relation to ethnographic encounters studied in class, some candidates let this overshadow the analysis of their own experiences and thus could not fulfil the requirements. The word limit also limits expansive methodological discussion.

## Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

**Recommendations in reference to changes to the SL IA in the 2010 Subject Guide**

The principles of the SL IA exercise for exams after 2002 and 2010 are the same: a one hour observation followed by a reflective commentary on the selected observed data. There has been some adjustment to the Criteria.

Major changes include clarity in relation to the position of the observer. Criteria B and D have now been collapsed into Criteria C. The distinction between the two was sometimes misunderstood, B was asking candidates to recognize that who we are, influences what we see, and D focused on the assumptions and bias we bring with us into the field. These are of course inexorably integrated and the revision of the criteria reflects this. Candidates should be pushed to investigate their own position, personal and social, prior to completing their Critique.

The poorly understood Criteria C in the 2002 Subject Guide is now Criterion B, where the requirement has been broadened to include specific examples and discussion. As mentioned above, there has been a tendency to merely mention the wording of the Criterion without actually applying it to the Report. To prepare for the Critique, candidates should be directed to finding descriptive inference in ethnographic texts and to contrast this to analysis. The critical distinction between description and analysis needs much closer attention in terms of classroom work with course ethnographies so that this may be carried over to the Critique.

Teachers should refer to the new Subject Guide for a detailed description of the changes (SL IA: pp. 38 - 44)

While it is the candidate's choice to do a context or issue based report, they could be asked to look for patterns of behaviour or group dynamics among the people they observe. This could give them more material to work with when they critique their report.

It is recommended that teachers continue to emphasize the self reflective aspects of the Critique. Methodological issues should be explicitly discussed throughout the course. Issues of focus and selection should be central in preparation for the Critique. It is often the case that description and categorization of groups of people observed are not analysed or even noted in the Critique. This needs to be developed in classroom discussion of all fieldwork experience. Gender, age, class, race can be incorporated into a larger discussion of focus,

assumptions and bias. Focus on how these factors affect the selection and interpretation of data is essential.

Teachers should also note that the time lapse between the observation and critique is set at six months.

### Further comments

The purpose of the SL IA exercise is to help candidates recognize the degree to which selectivity plays a role in data collection. This is best done if candidates are encouraged to explain what they see so they can get a feeling for what kinds of activities and people interest them, so as better to critique their Reports.

The SL exercise is an opportunity to engage candidates in a defamiliarization experiment in which they are asked to look at what they know as usual and normal as an outsider. This is a useful tool in teaching anthropology where we strive to “make the strange familiar and the familiar strange”.

## Higher level paper one

### Component grade boundaries

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 8	9 - 11	12 - 13	14 - 16	17 - 20

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

Some candidates had pre-memorized definitions for key concepts and used these even when they were not entirely relevant in their answers. Some key concepts such as globalization were not well defined or understood by some of the weaker candidates.

The weaker candidates produced scripts which were entirely descriptive, close to the text and, in the weakest cases, much too short to gain many marks.

Some candidates did not manage their time well and were not able to complete all the questions on the paper. This was a particular issue for question 3 and this is unfortunate as question 3 has more marks allocated to the question than the other questions on the paper.

The societies chosen for comparison in question 3 were not always fully contextualized, particularly in terms of author and date. In some cases the candidates do not fully describe the case study chosen. Also, the relevance of the society is not always clearly shown in the answer.

Anthropological concepts like globalization were not aptly discussed and some candidates discussed societies where globalization was not in evidence and so the comparison did not meet a key requirement of the question.

In the weakest scripts the candidates did not manage to carry out the comparison required in question 3 and wrote on only one society or very briefly managed to mention the Maya in the closing sentence of the answer.

A small number of candidates used comparative ethnographies in their answers to question 1 and this is not required. By doing this they limited the time they had to answer the question drawing on materials found in the text itself.

A few scripts were very short and depended heavily on quotations from the text. When either of these situations arose the candidates did not do as well as they might otherwise have done.

Unfortunately in a few instances candidates reproduced rather negative stereotypes about Mayan peasants and made some irrelevant, ethnocentric and inappropriate statements that have no place in a social anthropology programme and examination.

## The levels of knowledge, understanding and skill demonstrated

The better candidates demonstrated excellent reading and comprehension skills, critical thinking under pressure, and the ability relevantly to interweave materials / ethnography / anthropological concepts to make strong and well developed points.

Some of the stronger scripts showed an ability to bring in relevant anthropological concepts and theorists in question 2 as well as to produce convincing abstract discussions supported by carefully chosen descriptive examples drawn from the examination text. There were some very good, anthropologically insightful and reflective answers, using relevant, fully contextualized ethnographies.

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

### Question 1

In question 1, weak answers relied heavily upon the text and “quoted” their answers rather than summarize and write answers in their own words. There was also considerable overlap or repetition between question 1 and 2 in some of the less strong scripts. Some candidates brought in comparative and usually non-relevant ethnographies in this question and so further lessened their chances of doing well by answering the question that was set on the examination. Better candidates were able to bring out the complexities of the issues raised by the relationship of money to wealth among the Maya citing moral superiority as a “weapon of the weak” (in this case of the poor) and describing how this moral superiority serves to oppress women even as they become more important as income earners.

As ever some candidates managed to mis-read the text and sometimes to build their answer on these misunderstandings.

### Question 2

Question 2 answers sometimes repeated points from question 1 rather than concentrate upon the labour force and changing position of women. Several candidates added comparative



ethnographic comments in this short answer question rather than save it for question 3 and this was often done at the expense of elaborating upon the issues in the question.

Stronger answers linked the position of women and changing gender roles to theoretical debates on the public-private divide and were able to link descriptive elements showing structural constraints (such as gossip) to more conceptual discussions on gender roles and the vesting of collective “honour” in women which serves both to elevate women as a category and to oppress individual women in practice for failing to live up to the impossible and contradictory social and ideological demands placed upon them.

### **Question 3**

Candidates who did particularly well on question 3 did so due to their use of apt comparative ethnographies. Those that did not do so well either missed this part of question 3, ran out of time for the answer, or used some quite old fashioned ethnography from the 1950s and 1960s in their answer and hence struggled to make the link between the more recent impact of globalization on the Maya and on the comparative ethnography of their choice.

Some candidates chose to focus their answer on the impact of globalization on changing gender roles while others selected the impacts of globalization on the economic systems in the comparative society of their choice. When done well both options produced excellent answers. A small number of candidates also compared ethnographies in terms of the theoretical orientations of the anthropologists who carried out the research and when this was relevant to a comparative understanding of the ethnographies it added a further reasoned and nuanced element to the answer.

While more and more candidates now understand the need to contextualize the comparative ethnography there were still some candidates who failed to name an ethnographer, historically contextualize their work or sometimes even to locate the precise place where the ethnography was carried out.

## **Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates**

As ever some centres fared better than others and appeared to have succeeded in encouraging candidates relevantly to describe, analyse and generalize as well as cite sources. While it is never possible to have an entire cohort of candidates who all do well in examination regular exercises testing and developing skills in descriptive writing, analysis and generalization – perhaps by introducing each question on the paper one at a time for discussion and study might help some candidates to learn from experience how best to distinguish the different skills tested on HLP1.

In particular, while most candidates do reasonably well on the more descriptive question 1, some do not move beyond description in question 2 and this limits the marks they can achieve on this particular question which also requires the demonstration of analytical skills and generalization.

Candidates should also have studied some contemporary ethnographies which they can draw on for their answers to question 3. In this year’s paper those candidates who used ethnographies from the 1950s or earlier were disadvantaged because of this by comparison with candidates who used more modern work where the impacts of globalization were clear.

In question 3 the most significant failings were poor choice of comparative ethnography and failing to produce a systematic comparison. In order to achieve the latter the candidates need to do more than to make a brief passing reference to the ethnography on the examination paper.

**Reminder:** the new programme will have first examinations in May 2010 please see the new assessment criteria for each kind of question (new Subject Guide pages 33-34). This clarifies how marks are awarded.

Candidates should be strongly discouraged from making negative personal comments of a stereotypical nature about the society in question on the examination paper. Early on in the anthropology classes issues of ethnocentrism should be explicitly addressed with a view to making the goal of social and cultural anthropology as the study of culture which seeks to understand, and not to rank other societies by reference to one's own society and one's own ways of doing and thinking, clear to all candidates.

## Higher level paper two

### Component grade boundaries

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 6	7 - 12	13 - 17	18 - 21	22 - 25	26 - 29	30 - 40

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

Many candidates failed to show that they had studied a sufficient number of ethnographies in detail and all too often papers showed evidence of the anthropological study of only one or two societies and in a few instances none at all. From 2010 with the introduction of new assessment criteria candidates who fail to demonstrate knowledge of a sufficient range of societies will be unable to achieve the highest marks in the examination.

Overall, candidates struggled to include or meaningfully integrate theory and analysis into their responses. Merely providing a statement that a particular ethnographer was part of a centre of thought is not sufficient to show theoretical understanding. Candidates often failed to make connections between the ethnographies they chose and fundamental theoretical issues or theory relevant to the question.

Comparison was also hindered in that many candidates would present societies one after the other, without providing a framework within which they could be compared. Training candidates to compare societies within an analytical or conceptual framework, rather than to organize their paper by society might alter this.

Some candidates did not include much in the way of social and cultural change, which will be a limitation in future papers, with the introduction of the 2010 criteria. In some cases, ethnography was not identified at all, or poorly identified and often used in general, uncritical terms. Rather, it should be well identified, detailed and set within an analytical framework that

draws from theory. In a small number of centres, candidates relied heavily on newspaper articles, personal experience or popular films.

Emphasis in all programmes should be on the detailed study of ethnographic texts or ethnographic films which are to be read, discussed and critically evaluated with due regard for the differences in the media. Teachers should note that personal experience, as the core ethnography in a response, will be discouraged from 2010 onwards.

## The levels of knowledge, understanding and skill demonstrated

The very best candidates produced strong, well-argued and detailed essays which would do well on an undergraduate programme in social and cultural anthropology. These candidates demonstrated not only excellent anthropological knowledge, sound theoretical understanding and considerable skill in producing focused, relevant and sophisticated, carefully nuanced essays but also some very astute observations on the nature of the discipline itself in a fast-changing world.

More broadly, many centres are clearly making a strong effort to encourage candidates to make use of theoretical issues (soon to be theoretical perspectives) and theoretical centres in the ethnographic analysis of culture and society. Where this happened candidates were able to present essays demonstrating a sound critical and analytical framework.

Most centres are using a good range of materials, although one or two are still relying heavily on pre-1970s materials. While some “classic” ethnographic texts are of continuing value and provide a solid grounding in the discipline, candidates must also be provided with a range of more contemporary ethnographies in order to be able to successfully cover sufficient themes of study and the more recent theoretical perspectives and concepts. This will enable them to write essays during the examination without struggling to find questions that they can answer on.

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

### Question 1

This question was generally answered satisfactorily and in some cases, for example, where kinship links were typically seen as adaptive, especially in urban contexts it was on occasion very well answered. Most candidates were able to provide descriptive, often without historical context, evidence of the relevance of kinship in one or two societies but these often lacked analysis and critical evaluation and comparison. Some candidates managed to provide evidence of the relevance of kinship but did not relate this to the **contemporary** relevance of kinship (or lack of it) and therefore these candidates failed to provide a full answer to the question. For this question the ethnographies of Bourgois’ *In Search of Respect*, Pun Ngai’s *Made in China*, and Lee’s *Dobe* were well used.

### Question 2

The primary weakness in the answers to this question revolved around the failure of candidates to explain what they understood by belief systems, what constituted processes of social change and how the two were linked. Nonetheless, there was a wide range of

responses to this question with candidates able to provide good ethnographic details and showing how social and cultural change had affected belief systems. Other scripts, however, lacked any kind of focus or reference to anthropological concepts.

Some Spanish-speaking candidates reversed the terms of the question, and attempted to show that belief systems caused social change (this was apparently due to the particular sentence structure used in the Spanish version. The syntax employed is grammatically correct, but is open to misinterpretation). The candidates were not penalized for this reversal of the question terms.

### **Question 3**

This was a very popular question on the examination paper and gender was by far the most favoured option. Overall, responses were mainly descriptive and lacked a solid analytical framework. When theory was used, it was usually in terms of light references to second wave feminism and a critical commentary was rarely provided. Better answers were able to discuss the work of Ortner and/or Rosaldo and to relate this to the ethnographies they had chosen as their descriptive cases. Some candidates appeared to want to prove that women were a part of the private sphere and men the public sphere without further problematizing the very terms themselves. Many candidates also assumed that gender roles in all societies restricted women on the basis of “natural facts of biology” without considering that these facts themselves are social constructions and carry an ideological load. No candidates recognized the possibility of more than two genders, and many equated sex to gender. Several candidates compared the “west” to the “rest”, claiming that the “west” was more advanced in terms of division of labour. These were often the same candidates who felt that this question needed to be about issues of equality. A few candidates chose to answer with ethnicity, but again these were rarely conceptually well informed.

In terms of ethnographies Ortner’s Sherpas, Pun Ngai’s Chinese factory women, and R. Lee’s Dobe were well used; Marxian, feminist, and social action approaches were well applied.

### **Question 4**

Relatively few candidates chose to answer this question and those who did mostly answered this question in terms of gender producing essays very close to those who wrote on gender in question 3. The candidates who chose social class did not define this concept and usually equated it to race or ethnicity. Several stated that women formed a lower social class than men thereby demonstrating their failure to understand the concept of social class. For some, political organization was often taken to mean involvement in federal-level politics, rather than looking at this theme in more complex anthropological terms. Many others simply described a society’s general social organization rather than the political organization.

### **Question 5**

Bourgeois was a frequent choice for ethnography in response to this question. Candidates did not clearly define race or ethnicity and tended to use these terms very generally and as if they were self-explanatory. Responses lacked critical and analytical frameworks and no candidate managed to explain how ethnicity or race became a social construct in the societies they selected.

**Question 6**

This was the most popular question in Section A and by far the most popular among English-speaking candidates. Some candidates demonstrated their knowledge of the contributions of anthropologists such as Polanyi, Sahlins and Mauss to exchange in their answers and when this was done well it provided a good theoretical and conceptual frame for the ethnographies selected by the candidates to write on. Many responses centred on Pun Ngai's Chinese factory women, Lee's Dobe, Wang's Chinatown study (San Francisco, U.S.), Bourgois' *In Search of Respect*, and Chagnon's Yanomamo. Malinowski and Weiner on the Trobriands, Boas and M. Harris on the Kwakiutl and some also chose the Tiv. The risk here was that some ethnographies were used to support a "west/rest" generalization. It was very reassuring to see that some candidates were able to utilise some more contemporary examples as with those who wrote about traditional exchange structures adapting positively as well as negatively as a consequence of globalization.

Many candidates, however, failed to recognize any kind of social and cultural change. Some chose to select the older aspects of ethnography, for example only focusing on the hunting and gathering phase of the Dobe Ju/Hoansi lifestyle, despite the fact that this now only makes a small part of their diet. Teachers are encouraged to complement older ethnography with the more contemporary studies of the society in question (or at least ask candidates not to ignore these parts of ethnographies that have been updated, such as Richard Lee's). This will become particularly important under the 2010 criteria.

Poorer scripts usually did not define "exchange", and often treated it as any kind of exchange of goods or services not involving money. The better answers carefully addressed "exchange", and presented analytical frameworks (usually K. Polanyi, or Sahlins).

**Question 7**

Most candidates chose religious practice and belief or social conflict with which to answer this question. Very few defined the global process(es) that were to be the focus of their response. Instead, they discussed globalization or "external forces" in very general terms. Those who chose indigenous movements often simply assumed that any indigenous society constituted an indigenous movement no matter what the people in the society did or did not actually do. Many of these essays lacked clear organization and structure. Several candidates which attempted the "indigenous movements" option were unsuccessful, and rarely even mentioned an actual "movement." Some answers mistakenly took "movement" to be about physical movement of people, or migration.

**Question 8**

Many candidates interpreted this question to mean that they needed to describe how groups of people were involved in formal political institutions such as those found in western democracies. Where candidates had not specifically studied ethnographies on this the answers they gave were rather vague and over general. The most popular ethnographies used were on the Trobrianders (Malinowski and Weiner), and on the Puerto Ricans in New York (Bourgois), as were the Chinese factory women of rural origin in Pun Ngai's study, and Hutchinson's British Sikhs. It was often apparent that candidates had not thoroughly studied political anthropology (with relevant concepts and theories) and were rather hazy about what "identity" might mean from an anthropological perspective which meant that the essays all too

often read as wishful thinking about what an anthropology of identity and politics might constitute. Ethnicity, gender, and class issues were all presented in interpreting “identity”. Those considering gender and class issues applied Marxian and/or feminist theory in examining the processes involved in negotiating identity.

### Question 9

Most candidates who answered this question had a good sense of how anthropology might be useful to a development project. However, many responses were speculative and relatively few referred to an actual instance where an anthropologist was involved in a development project. Almost no candidates attempted to define development or show an understanding of anthropology’s history of involvement in the development agenda. A global understanding of how understandings of development have evolved, coupled with an understanding of applied and engaged anthropology (and the debates between the two) might have allowed for greater success. The phrasing, “how *can* anthropologists...?” may have suggested to some candidates the legitimacy of taking a hypothetical approach, which led to very general arguments listing the skills which anthropologists accumulate by dint of their having carried out cross-cultural research, being ethical, giving voice to the other, *etc.* Such an approach, however, did not produce strong answers.

### Question 10

This was a very popular question in Section B. Very few candidates clearly defined globalization or colonialism but those who did were able to cite Appadurai and to use his “scapes” in a satisfactory manner. Others cited Eriksen and his edited text on globalization. However, despite some strong answers to this question most candidates discussed globalization in very general terms. Responses could have been improved had candidates focused on analysis rather than passing judgment on whether globalization was positive or negative. Many responses included romantic notions of the insider-outsider or simplistic notions of cultural imposition and resistance.

A common weakness in the answers to this question was the relatively short shrift given to colonialism which was sometimes only briefly mentioned in passing. Candidates who wrote mostly, or entirely, on globalization did not manage to answer the question as set.

### Question 11

Responses to this question were often hindered by the fact that relatively few candidates even attempted to define commodity and most wrote as if this term was self-evident and required no definition or discussion. Unfortunately, one consequence of not showing a clear understanding of commodity was that the ethnography selected to answer the question was sometimes misrepresented. When the question was well answered Ortner’s Sherpas, Wang’s Chinatown study, and a paper on craft development on the Sepik River (PNG) were often used to provide ethnographic data, mostly with the appropriate application of globalization theory (*e.g.*, Hall, Eriksen, Appadurai). Some Spanish scripts made good use of Garcia Canclini’s work on the commodification of traditional craft production in Mexico. However, the majority of scripts took a mostly descriptive approach, and often it appeared doubtful that much of “culture” was being commodified, as examples often restricted themselves to very narrow aspects of culture, for example, the performance of religious services for pay in a cemetery.

### Question 12

This was a question that solicited some successful responses when candidates were able to successfully explain what was meant by symbol and how anthropologists had used this to study material objects, ideologies and ritual. The use of Turner (on the Ndembu or in more general conceptual terms) and discussions of the Virgin of Guadeloupe were often both detailed and relevant. Bourdieu's practice theory was also well employed by candidates. Some candidates chose to discuss three to five symbols or societies, which were too many for a short essay and led to superficial descriptions and discussions. Focus on one symbol and comparing the way those different groups interpreted it may have allowed for greater depth, rather than superficial breadth.

## Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

### Defining terms

Candidates in several centres have not acquired the habit of defining terms. Candidates must realize that most of the important concepts in anthropology, as in most disciplines, are problematic to some extent, and need to be defined. This was routinely done by candidates in some centres, but in others terms such as those following were rarely defined, partially or erroneously defined, and often then applied in ways that brought the candidates' understanding of these terms into question. In this paper, terms such as "identity", "globalization", "colonization", "ethnicity", "economic exchange", "reciprocity", "indigenous movement", "migration", "gender", *etc.*, were frequently treated as known quantities not requiring definition.

### Theoretical grounding

Some centres are preparing their candidates to use theory and Theoretical Issues (soon to become Theoretical Perspectives) very well indeed. However, these important aspects of the programme of study were absent from a significant number of scripts (and may well have been taught but simply not included in scripts by candidates. This raises the issue of how to get what is taught in the classroom into the examination script). Teachers need to be preparing candidates clearly to define terms and ideas core to a question within the framework of anthropological theory and reading. Ideas such as globalization, development, commodity, ethnicity, race, and even political organization were all examples of generally poorly understood terms on this examination paper. Teachers should ideally complement ethnographic study with more conceptual reading that helps candidates to understand these ideas within the framework of anthropological theory and history and to provide sufficient class time for discussion of what are challenging concepts for candidates to grasp and then learn to use in their own writing. Candidates should be encouraged to use the concepts they have learnt in the classroom in every essay they write to help them provide more deeply analytical responses to questions.

Teachers may find it useful to use the OCC and workshops to share resources and discuss ideas about how they approach the teaching and learning of theory in their classes.

### **Use of ethnography**

Overall, a broad and interesting range of ethnography is being taught. However, the understanding and analysis of these societies sometimes appears somewhat superficial.

Candidates should study the theory and theoretical perspectives that are most relevant to the four societies they study in detail so that they can develop a deeper understanding of the history and trends in anthropology in relation to their ethnographies. Teachers should always begin with the careful selection of ethnography and draw out from these relevant concepts, theories and perspectives.

Some centres are evidently teaching many more than four societies. While this is certainly not discouraged and is very helpful when used to complement core materials with a wider range of articles and films, the addition of more societies should not occur at the expense of depth of understanding. Some candidates had clearly been exposed to a great deal of ethnographic material but struggled to use it to any kind of real analytical depth.

Candidates should also be encouraged to focus on one or two societies within a given essay. Those who use three or more often struggle to include sufficient detail and analysis.

It should be noted that newspaper articles, popular movies and personal experience can all be ways of helping candidates see a variety of perspectives on social and cultural life. However, these sources should not replace ethnography and should not be the only sources of social life that candidates can draw upon for the answers to questions in examination.

### **Social and cultural change**

As we move towards 2010, teachers should bear in mind that the new syllabus requires candidates to discuss social and cultural change as a matter of practice in all responses. Section B of the examination has been fully integrated with Section A from 2010 and teachers should note that globalization has been added as a suggested topic of study to all core themes. For example, it is clear that kinship can be discussed in contemporary as well as traditional frameworks.

From the examination scripts for this session certain topical areas of the course stand out as poorly understood, and possibly ignored by candidates. Certainly, globalization is a very unclear concept in the minds of many candidates, for whom it seems to be indistinguishable from “modernization” or simply social or cultural change. The complexities of identity and ethnicity in a globalizing world are also poorly handled, as was evident from performance on certain questions, detailed above. Anthropological views of indigenous movements seemed to be of little interest to these candidates, possibly ignoring the fact that they have figured in Paper 2 since 2002, at least. Development is another avoided and/or poorly handled topic, although again, it has frequently been an option on Paper 2 for some years. With the inception of the new (2010) programme, the old division between Section A and B will not exist, and issues of change and globalization will pervade the programme’s themes. It must be remembered that beginning with the 2010 examinations, candidates will be expected to show understanding of processes of change and transformation in at least one of their essays, or they will be explicitly penalized by losing marks on one criterion (see 2010 Subject Guide, p. 35).

Teachers are encouraged to use contemporary materials and to complement older materials with newer interpretations of the society studied. Candidates are expected to recognize that



society and culture are in constant process of change and development and that this is not always to be considered as a negative “culture loss”. The boundaries between societies and cultures (and indeed within them) are today understood to be more fluid and permeable than some earlier theoretical understandings may perhaps have allowed for.

In addition, teachers are also encouraged to teach globalization critically and to engage candidates in some of the debates on the ways in which globalization plays out in the world. Many authors would argue against the notion that globalization is simply a form of westernization or cultural homogenization and also encourage the study of the creativity and resilience of cultural groups. This resilience is sometimes in the form of resistance, but can also be in the form of contributing to processes of globalization or using agency in interesting ways to integrate or adapt to social and cultural change. Teachers are encouraged to share globalization resources on the OCC and at workshops.

Teachers should continue to make connections between the ethnographies they study and the fundamental theoretical issues and theories. They should also continue to encourage candidates to incorporate the underlying principles in their answers.

## Higher level paper three

### Component grade boundaries

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 2	3 - 4	5 - 6	7 - 9	10 - 12	13 - 15	16 - 20

### General comments

Overall, centres are doing a good job of preparing candidates to discuss theoretical issues in anthropology. In general, papers were focused and included theory, theoretical issues and ethnography. In some cases, there still needs to be much work done in helping candidates make relevant links between these three aspects of the syllabus.

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

There was considerable variation in terms of the challenges faced by individual centres and candidates. In some cases, candidates made reference to issues, anthropological centres and ethnography but struggled to make relevant links between them. In this sense, criterion D proved to be the area where only the very best candidates excelled. In these cases, carefully selected materials and training in analysis would be helpful. For other centres, while knowledge was present, it remained superficial. In the weakest instances, no theory, theoretical issues, and/or ethnography were presented. In the case of one or two centres, theory did not move beyond 1960, which severely limited the ability of candidates to assess the theoretical trends in anthropology over the last century. In some cases, candidates are still not fully identifying ethnography (particularly fieldwork dates).

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

Again, there was wide variation between centres and candidates. In some cases, the ability of candidates to produce sophisticated responses that drew relevant and systematically organized links between centres, issues and ethnography was impressive. It is clear that some teachers have taken the time to aid candidates in developing a deep understanding of introductory anthropology. In other cases, it was clear that candidates had exposure to issues, theory and ethnography but struggled to link these together in relevant ways. In other cases, candidates had a general idea of trends in anthropology but were not able to explain these generalizations in theoretical terms.

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

### Question 1

Question 1 was not a popular question and candidates who selected it, seemed to find it particularly challenging. When answered, candidates rarely showed any knowledge of theories directly connected to dependency theory or neo-colonialism. Theorists such as Gunder-Frank, Wallerstein, Wolf and other political economists would have all been appropriate. These could have been linked to Marxist influences. Candidates also struggled to make ethnography relevant to this question.

### Question 2

There was considerably variation in the quality of responses to this question. Some candidates had a good general grasp of the interpretive critique that responded to earlier functionalist and positivist trends. The best candidates provided solid, systematic analysis that showed good knowledge and critical commentary on theoretical trends in anthropology. They often linked the Critique to post-modernism. However, few candidates were able to relate interpretivism to specific theorists. Marcus, Fischer, Clifford and Geertz are all relevant examples. Some candidates mentioned Geertz but provided little detail as to why or how his ideas were relevant to the interpretive critique. Use of ethnography was often stretched with candidates trying to force the interpretive critique into an older ethnography or film, rather than drawing on an author who had explicitly been influenced by interpretivism.

### Question 3

Many candidates responded to this question with varying levels of success. Unfortunately, the majority struggled with the issue of materialism and were unable to effectively define this term. This was surprising as it is a core issue in the syllabus. Some candidates defined material conditions simply as money or economy. Lee's ethnography of the Dobe Ju/'Hoansi was popular and appropriate.

However, very few candidates recognized the cultural neo-evolutionist theoretical influences present in this ethnography and were uncritical in their analyses. Also, it is clear that some centres are using older editions of this ethnography leading candidates to use out of date terminology (e.g. Kung) which meant that they lacked critical awareness, and an

understanding of the relevance of the Ju/'Hoansi shift to a sedentary lifestyle. Bourgois was also used, sometimes effectively. Here, candidates needed to recognize the political economy approach taken by Bourgois. Many candidates correctly identified Marx as a materialist, but struggled to link his ideas to anthropological centres such as political economy and world systems theories. Some candidates mistakenly identified Marx as an anthropologist.

#### **Question 4**

This was also a popular question that solicited a great variety of responses. There were many candidates who very successfully responded to the structure and agency option. In these instances, candidates were able to show how ethnographers blend theory and theoretical issues in writing their ethnographic accounts. These candidates showed that their studies had included detailed practice of discussing ethnography in conjunction with theory and theoretical issues. There were also candidates who understood the issues of synchronic and diachronic effectively. Cohesion and conflict were sometimes used well, although many candidates understood these issues literally – discussing the level of violence in a society, rather than the theoretical perspective of the author. In some cases, responses were mainly descriptive accounts of ethnography or popular film with almost no reference to theory.

#### **Question 5**

This was a moderately popular question. Many candidates were able to correctly define the issue of particularistic. Many also linked this issue to ideas of Franz Boas and contrasted it to the notion of ethnocentrism. Few were able to see the contrast with, equally valid, more universalistic theoretical approaches that chose to generalize about humanity with social theories. Most candidates struggled to make ethnography relevant to this question or to provide a clearly organized analytical framework within which they could critically assess the question.

## **Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates**

Advice to teachers falls under several categories. These include: selection and use of materials, use of criteria, historical context of theory and essay writing skills.

### **Selection and use of materials**

While most candidates were able to refer to theoretical issues, theory and ethnography in their responses, many struggled to draw relevant links between these three key areas. Teachers need to be selecting ethnographic materials that allow them to consistently and consciously help candidates understand theoretical issues and trends in anthropology.

Pages 10-11 of the new Subject Guide may give teachers a starting point of how this can be achieved. The Online Curriculum Centre, face-to-face workshops and online workshops are also all good resources in helping teachers learn how to best introduce and approach theory in their courses.

Candidates should regularly discuss and practice tying theory into their ethnographic studies. They should also take the time to compare and contrast the different ethnographies studied so that they can build a picture of the varying approaches taken by ethnographers and

theoretical trends in anthropology. It is expected that teachers would introduce theory and theoretical approaches in a simple manner at the beginning of the course and circle back to these ideas throughout the two-years of study in increasing complex ways.

### **Use of criteria**

Both teachers and candidates need to be acutely aware of the criteria present in the Subject Guide. Teachers should take the time to explain the criteria for this paper to candidates. For example, in the case of weaker candidates, reference to theoretical centres was missing which limited success on both criteria B and D.

### **Historical context of theory**

Candidates need to have an awareness of the historical context of theory and the theoretical trends that have taken place in anthropology from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century to present day. Teachers must take responsibility to teach contemporary theory and help candidates recognize how theoretical approaches and centres shape ethnographic accounts. This requires carefully planning of courses. To be successful on criterion D, candidates must have the ability to compare and contrast theories and trends. If teachers can achieve this goal, they may find that candidates will greatly enjoy the study of theory as they will have a stronger grasp of its relevance to ethnography and to society. Again, teachers are encouraged to use the resources available to them to help plan their course including the Subject Guide, the Online Curriculum Centre, face-to-face and online workshops.

### **Essay writing skills**

As always, it is helpful to set aside part of the course to explicitly teach essay writing skills. Some teachers have clearly done this as candidate work shows clearly organized, systematic analyses of theory and ethnography. Other teachers could dedicate a little more time, and provide examples, to helping candidates formulate clear frameworks that tie theory, issues and ethnography together. Peer critique and candidate analyses of sample papers may be one useful method in helping to teach these skills.

## **Standard level paper one**

### **Component grade boundaries**

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 8	9 - 11	12 - 13	14 - 16	17 - 20

### **General comments**

Most candidates were able to demonstrate a general understanding of the text, in this case in terms of the impact of economic globalization on gender relations among Maya villagers in Yucatan, Mexico. Many candidates were also able to present comparative ethnographic materials, although quite often the focus was on gender relations rather than the experience

of globalization as called for in the comparative question. More often than is usually the case, many answers were very text dependent either in terms of direct quotation or very close paraphrase. As usual, the range of achievement was wide with the critical difference being the ability to think and write conceptually – here in terms of globalization and gender relations – and thus analyse rather than describe. The best answers – and there were some excellent ones made this distinction very clear.

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

As already suggested above, in terms of the programme and in general terms, a lack of recognition, definition and application of relevant terms and concepts in relation to gender relations and globalization, was the most limiting factor for a good many candidates, resulting in answers that were essentially descriptive rather than analytical. This was also evident in the inability of a good many answers to move beyond specifics to develop either larger generalizations (question 1) or explicit and systematic comparisons (question 3). More specifically, an understanding of morality, as presented in the text, seemed quite problematic with many candidates not able to show how it is related to cultural categories, and even suggesting that some groups are more moral than others. In terms of the examination, many candidates were not sufficiently focused in terms of addressing the specific requirements of each question (examples are given below). Finally, although some candidates gave full identification and contextualization for their comparative ethnographic case, too many did not.

## Areas of the programme and examination in which the candidates appeared well prepared

Almost all candidates were able to complete all three questions, and in several centres many appeared to have quite strong analytical and comparative skills. Most candidates were also clearly familiar with the topic of gender relations and the division of labour, and had some understanding of ways in which these may change. Also gossip as a social institution was quite often recognized as a mechanism for social sanctions and control. Almost all candidates were able to demonstrate quite detailed knowledge of their chosen ethnographic materials although their relevance to the question was not always clearly established.

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

### Question 1

This question produced a wide range of answers. Most candidates were able to describe, more or less in their own words, the Maya perspective on the relation between wealth and morality, and to link this to the Maya notion of “tranquillity”. Many also recognized that the Maya perspective reflected an explicit comparison with others; however only a few were able to develop a more critical view of the relation between poverty and morality or to develop relevant generalizations. Less successful answers were either very text-dependent, incomplete and/or focused more on the impact of economic globalization than on the Maya understanding of the relation between wealth and morality.

## Question 2

Most candidates were able to demonstrate a general understanding of how economic globalization had altered the position of Maya women, and many recognized the role of gossip as a social sanction, but most answers were more descriptive than analytical, essentially reproducing the explanation and sometimes examples given in the text itself rather than linking it to relevant anthropological arguments. Quite often these answers were, again, very text dependent. While some candidates described the apparent contradiction between increased participation in the cash economy and increased social subordination, only a few were able to link this to the public/private dichotomy or to point out that assumptions about economic empowerment is embedded in specific cultural contexts and may not take into account other local cultural ideologies.

## Question 3

There were some excellent answers to this question that gave clear anthropological conceptualization to globalization as a recent phenomenon, provided complete identification and contextualization of the chosen ethnographic case, and developed an informed and systematic comparison with the experience of Maya women, but these were the exception rather than the rule. While almost all candidates were able to present a comparative ethnographic case, more often the cases chosen (for example cases from the 1950s, 1960s or 1970s) were not clearly about globalization. These were rarely defined – and quite often focused on gender, which did not necessarily meet the requirements of the question where the key comparative term was “globalization”. For example, some ethnographies chosen for comparison referred to colonialism (e.g. Bohannon on the Tiv), or modernization and urbanization (e.g. Safa on the Urban Poor of Puerto Rico) but made little effort to make the case that such examples were similar to or different from the experience of globalization as a more recent phenomenon, or to define the term. In addition to the problem of showing how the case chosen might be relevant, identification of the ethnographic materials was quite often very incomplete (for example, including only the date of publication or no time frame at all) and presentation was more descriptive, often in narrative form – than comparative.

For all of these reasons, answers to this question were less successful than is usually the case, but illustrate very clearly what candidates need to keep clearly in focus: to make sure that they have recognized and defined the key comparative term(s), chosen ethnographic material that is relevant - or can be made relevant - to the question, and developed in context and in systematic comparison to the given case.

## Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- **Reminder:** the new programme will have first examinations in May 2010. For SL Paper 1, this involves no change in format or weighting as part of the overall grade (this remains at 30%, see new Subject Guide page 26), but in addition to the usual markschemes made available after each examination, there are **new assessment criteria** for each kind of question (see new Subject
- (Subject Guide page 30), which clarify how marks are awarded and should be in the hands of both teachers and candidates. As these criteria are independent of any

particular text, it is strongly recommended that they be used with any previous Paper 1 text in regular classroom practice.

- In terms of practice, as said in previous years and cannot be said too often or too strongly, it is essential that teachers work with candidates to help them recognize how relevant anthropological concepts and frameworks can be linked to materials presented in a given text. This should become a part of everyday classroom practice. It is strongly recommended that teachers develop sets of more and less effective answers for different topics/texts for classroom use.
- This is also the case for the teaching and learning of comparative skills (question 3) which are essential for both Paper 1 and Paper 2. Here again, the new assessment criteria should be helpful in guiding instruction. Teachers may also need to remind candidates that comparative ethnography is not expected in answers to question 1 or question 2.
- Teachers also need to help candidates clarify key question terms, to make sure that answers are relevant and closely focused; again, practice with previous texts should be helpful here.
- Finally, in terms of ethnographic materials, it is important that teachers try to ensure that candidates are familiar with some contemporary materials (some were perhaps disadvantaged this year by older materials), and understand why it is essential to give full identification and context for the chosen case.

## Standard level paper two

### Component grade boundaries

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 5	6 - 11	12 - 16	17 - 21	22 - 27	28 - 32	33 - 40

### General comments

With an increase in SL candidates of more than 25% over May 2008, and with some ten new centres, it was encouraging to see several of these new centres already establishing a solid level of achievement. As usual, the range of work seen varied enormously, from outstanding in some cases to all but minimal in others, and with a wide range in between. Where some scripts showed strong evidence of anthropological knowledge and understanding and good analytical skills, others seemed at best common sense or personal responses, with little evidence of anything anthropological at all. Again, and much as usual, this often varied between centres, with some producing consistently anthropologically informed and thoughtful answers and others being more varied, not only in terms of the kinds of knowledge and understanding demonstrated, but also in terms of an ability to develop answers that were analytical rather than descriptive. At the top end, most candidates seemed to be able to perform well across both Sections A and B; however many less successful papers continued to find Section B more difficult. Although most candidates appeared to have quite detailed

ethnographic knowledge across a range of societies or groups, some centres seemed to be rather limited in their choices, where ethnographic materials were either outdated or quite similar, and were generally less successful in establishing the relevance of their materials.

As is always the case, the critical difference between stronger and weaker answers was not only the range of ethnographic knowledge demonstrated but also the ability to use anthropological concepts and approaches to develop answers that were analytical rather than descriptive. It is clear that this continues to present a challenge to quite a number of candidates and to some centres.

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

Several areas of the programme presented problems for many candidates. In Section A, questions about the relation between political organization and social class or gender, as well as about the strategic use of social constructs such as ethnicity or class were often poorly answered. In Section B, relatively few were able to define or distinguish between key terms such as global processes, globalization and colonialism, and development projects as well as indigenous movements were not well understood. This quite often meant that candidates did not really establish the relevance of their materials in terms of the question. In terms of the examination, conceptual knowledge and analytical skills were often quite limited and ethnographic materials too often not fully identified or contextualized. And perhaps more often than usual, a good number of candidates did not focus sufficiently on the precise terms of the question, leaving answers either incomplete or not directly relevant.

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

In terms of the programme, most candidates were able to demonstrate quite detailed ethnographic knowledge of several societies or groups, as well as quite a sound anthropological understanding of different topics including kinship, the gendered division of labour, exchange relations, the commodification of culture and symbolic meanings. In terms of the examination itself, most candidates also had quite good comparative skills, and a strong and consistent performance in some centres demonstrated very good analytical and comparative knowledge, skills and understandings, suggesting what can be achieved at this level.

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

#### **Question 1**

Candidates choosing this question were more often than not able to demonstrate quite a sound knowledge of kinship principles and their working out in a specific society. However only a few paid close attention to the terms of the question, to demonstrate its “contemporary relevance”, thus many answers were incomplete. Less successful answers either wrote in very general “common sense” terms about “family” and/or presented very outdated materials that lacked any contemporary relevance.



**Question 2**

Not many answers were very successful here largely because there was little conceptualization of what might constitute “belief systems”. More often answers focused on the transformation of a variety of cultural practices with little attempt to adequately link these to beliefs of any kind. Much too often this was treated as a general question about social change and answers rarely established the relevance of their ethnographic materials.

**Question 3**

This was a popular question with most candidates focusing on gender, and a good many at least able to demonstrate some familiarity with relevant concepts and show how these could be applied to different societies. Stronger answers were usually comparative not only in terms of women and men but across several societies, demonstrating an ability to compare and contrast, and to comment thoughtfully on these comparisons. Less successful answers on gender were either entirely descriptive and/or limited to simplistic and sometimes questionable assertions about differences between women and men. Migration and ethnicity were occasionally chosen and a few candidates were able to make good use of relevant ethnography – for example Chavez’ *Shadowed Lives* or Bourgois’ *In Search of Respect* - to explore the relationship between migration or ethnicity and the division of labour, sometimes linking the two. But more candidates who chose these options, simply described an ethnographic case without any attempt at analysis or comparison.

**Question 4**

This was not often chosen and rarely well done, with only a few candidates able to define key terms and develop an analytical framework. In particular the power dimension of political organization was mostly missing. While there were some attempts to establish the relevance of chosen ethnography, quite often this was more or less ignored. As with question 2, rather often it seemed that this was treated as a general question and elicited quite random responses. Better answers worked closely with specific ethnography, for example Chagnon’s *Yanomamo* or Bourgois’ *In Search of Respect* – to explore the relation between political organization and gender or social class respectively.

**Question 5**

Not very many candidates seemed either to understand this question or have the conceptual tools to answer it effectively, however those that did – most often using either Bourgois’ *In Search of Respect* or Chavez’ *Shadowed Lives*, produced some informed and quite thoughtful answers. Other less successful answers, while demonstrating some understanding of race as a social construct and sometimes quite extensive knowledge of the history of racism in the United States, provided no ethnography in support of the argument.

**Question 6**

This was a popular question and quite often quite well answered, with many candidates demonstrating at least some familiarity with different forms of exchange, and many able to provide detailed ethnographic materials to support a variety of arguments. Lee’s *The Ju/hoansi* and Weiner’s *Trobrianders* were perhaps the most successful cases used.

(A word of caution to those using only Malinowski's Trobriand materials: in terms of answers to this question, more often than not the examples as presented were often problematic.) The best answers were able to make an explicit comparison between reciprocity, redistribution, and market exchange – one or two citing both Mauss and Polanyi's contributions – and to suggest that in some contexts even market exchange could be seen as more than economic. More limited answers presented only one case and tended to be largely descriptive, with key conceptualization left implicit at best. There were also some misdirected answers, mostly from one or two centres, where exchange was either interpreted as something (e.g. reindeer) being given up and replaced by something else (e.g. snowmobiles) or as only the communication of ideas, suggesting little or no familiarity with the extensive anthropological discussion of exchange relations.

### **Question 7**

This was quite a popular question but not often very well done, either because candidates did not relate the topic chosen to global processes or discuss what these might be in any meaningful way, or because the relevance of the ethnographic materials was never clearly established. Answers were more often focused on the relation to global processes of either religious belief and practice or social conflict, with indigenous movements not often addressed and rarely understood. Some of the better answers explored the emergence of cargo cults in the context of colonialism and missionary activities, or social conflict between different ethnic groups in the context of migration and economic restructuring.

### **Question 8**

This was not very often chosen but a number of candidates were more or less successful in showing some of the ways in which identity may be political, for example as resistance with indigenous groups in Ecuador or Brazil, or for young nyoricans in their participation in the underground economy and "street culture". Weaker answers struggled to demonstrate the relevance of the ethnography presented and lacked any anthropological conceptualization.

### **Question 9**

This was quite often chosen but only occasionally well answered, largely because candidates either had at best a very vague and common-sense understanding of what a development project might be or had no case study materials that addressed the issue. Thus many answers were very general and quite often hypothetical, although sometimes able to identify relevant concepts such as ethnocentrism and articulate the value of an emic perspective in this context. Happily some candidates were able to write from specific ethnographic materials - more successful cases presented were from Bali and Java in Indonesia, or from Ecuador - which allowed them at least to clarify ways in which anthropologists might have done it better. But even here there was fairly weak conceptualization of the larger notion of development.

### **Question 10**

This was a popular question and produced a very wide range of answers. Stronger answers directly defined and addressed the key terms to establish some of the ways – cultural, economic, political, in which globalization could be seen, or not, though this was rarer - as a modern form of colonialism and provided quite detailed ethnographic material to support their claims.

More often candidates simply agreed with the statement with almost no discussion of the terms, and assumed that by describing a variety of social changes – not necessarily the consequence of globalization and rarely trying to make the case that they could be seen in these terms – were almost always destructive of local culture, like colonialism. In these weaker answers there was little evidence of any anthropological or much historical knowledge or understanding in terms of the differences between these key terms and processes, and thus many responses failed to establish the relevance of their ethnographic materials.

### Question 11

This question produced quite a wide range of responses, but a good many were able to demonstrate some understanding of key terms (culture and commodity) and were able to identify contexts – particularly tourism and western consumerism, in which this process can be seen. Although sometimes the meaning of commodity needed clearer definition, most candidates were able to present relevant ethnographic materials to support their arguments. But this was not always the case and some candidates seemed to have very limited understanding of commodification and struggled to establish the relevance of the ethnographic materials presented.

### Question 12

This was not often chosen and only a relatively few candidates were able to sustain a full answer focused on just one symbol as required by the question. However more candidates were able to demonstrate some appreciation of the ways in which symbols can be very differently interpreted. Perhaps the strongest answers focused on internal variations and changes over time. For example, the jibaro image in Bourgois' *In Search of Respect*. However others were also quite effective in showing how the same symbol may have very different meanings cross culturally – a quite effective and frequent example was the veil, as seen in Fernea's work in an Iraqi village and discussed later in an article in McCurdy and Spradley's *Conformity and Conflict* by Fernea and her husband. Although conceptualization was often quite limited, candidates were more often quite effective in illustrating their claims.

## Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- **Reminder:** the new programme will have **first examinations in May 2010**. For SL Paper 2 this involves a **change in both format and assessment criteria**, although weighting as part of the overall grade remains at 50%. Details are on pages 29, 31-32 of the new Subject Guide. In terms of format, candidates will now choose any 2 essay questions out of 10, based on the 8 themes in part 2 of the syllabus (social and cultural organization - see pages 17-20 of the new Subject Guide), with no Sections A and B. In terms of assessment criteria, there are several key changes: old criteria A and B have been combined into **new criteria A (Conceptual knowledge and analysis)** now worth 6 marks; **use of ethnographic materials** remains at 8 marks (**criteria B** in the new programme), marks for **Comparison – now criteria C** - has been increased from 4 to 5; and two new criteria have been added to be marked across both essays, focusing on knowledge of processes of change and transformation (criteria D) and on the breadth of ethnographic knowledge presented

(criteria E) which will now reward candidates for their ability to demonstrate knowledge of two or more societies. **It is obviously essential that both teachers and candidates become very familiar with these changes and new assessment criteria.**

- **Knowledge and application of relevant anthropological concepts and arguments** remains key to successful performance and this is perhaps the key factor that distinguishes between successful candidates, and sometimes centres. Candidates need to be able to recognize and define key concepts in anthropological terms and to use them to develop or frame an argument supported by relevant ethnographic materials.
- **Knowledge of relevant ethnographic materials is also key:** rather often this year it seemed that some candidates were limited by the ethnographic materials they had studied, either because they were somewhat outdated, did not reflect contemporary anthropological issues, or were limited in term of regional coverage.
- Finally, in the new programme as in the old, **careful identification and contextualization of ethnographic materials** continues to be critical. Candidates need to be aware that this requires more than the date of publication.