

November 2012 subject reports

## 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 - 38	39 - 49	50 - 61	62 - 72	73 - 100

#### Standard Level

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 12	13 - 25	26 - 37	38 - 50	51 - 62	63 - 75	76 - 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 - 9	10 - 11	12 - 13	14 - 15	16 - 20

### The range and suitability of the work submitted

There were four times as many appropriate and well-focused topics this time as there were inappropriate topics, certainly an improvement over November 2011. Still, there is much room for improvement: only about half of the reports presented appropriate *and* well-focused topics.

Issue-based research issues outnumbered context-based issues by an even greater proportion than was the case in November 2011. Context-based reports may tend to be less focused than issue-based reports; context-based reports can be an ideal way to limit the scope of an investigation. In this session, three of the best four reports in the sample moderated were context-based, although focused on well-defined problems. For example, there was a study of how the concepts of structure and agency might help in explaining the behaviour of members of Swazi regiments. Another such example concerned the “manipulation of symbols” employed by *Yu-Gi-Oh!* card players. A third concerned the relation of western medicine to alternative medicine, religion and magic in the context of one public hospital. Among the many issue-based reports, while many phrased their research questions in an overly-general manner (for example, “how does the perception of climate change vary

among different age groups?”), the best report seen this session took a mostly issue-based approach, examining multigenerational variations in the interpretations of healing rituals in one Southern African ethnic group.

## Candidate performance against each criterion

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

As mentioned above, the number of appropriate and well-focused research questions was about the same as the number of inappropriate and appropriate but poorly-focused questions, clearly an improvement over November 2011.

### **Criterion B: Research techniques**

Improvement over the previous November session was seen here also: most of the reports moderated achieved at least 2 of 4 marks, indicating a basic understanding of the role of research techniques in anthropological research. More than a third of the candidates earned 3 or 4 marks. However, detail in describing techniques or their application was often lacking.

### **Criterion C: Presentation of data**

Similarly to performance under criterion B, the great majority of reports achieved at least 2 marks here, and again, there is room for improvement, as a lack of detail in presentation was easily the greatest shortcoming seen.

### **Criterion D: Interpretation and analysis of data**

Once again, this criterion seems to be showing the greatest discrepancy between the internal marks and the external moderated marks. It seems that the concept of “analytic framework” is very loosely interpreted, generally. And again, while candidates generally seem to have heard that they should engage anthropological concepts and/or theory in their reports, all too often the concepts or theories seem to be “injected”, that is, concepts or theories are mentioned or discussed that are not relevant, or are too superficially applied to advance the analysis.

### **Criterion E: Ethical issues**

Only a little over a third of candidates did more than just mention ethical issues emerging from research practice, and a fifth of candidates made no reference to ethical issues. The better reports went beyond simple issues of informant privacy to consider issues of representation and positionality.

### **Criterion F: Anthropological insight and imagination**

Somewhat more than half of the reports achieved less than two marks here. This is often due to poorly focused research questions, a largely descriptive approach, and/or the lack of analytical frameworks. Also, some indication of reflexive and critical

thinking about the process of data gathering and interpreting should be expected if full marks are to be awarded under this criterion.

## Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

### Choosing topics and research questions

Guiding candidates toward worthwhile and achievable research goals may be the most difficult task a teacher faces with regard to this component. If the topic is not worthwhile and well focused, data presentation is likely to lack detail and appear superficial; consequently, data analysis is likely to lack clarity of focus, and thus appear superficial.

### Choosing and describing research techniques and procedures

Most shortcomings seen relating to research methodology results from lack of detail in describing techniques and their application. Most candidates have not systematically considered the need to describe the research context, that is, selection procedures for choosing informants, numbers of informants, and the circumstances under which research instruments are administered.

### Application of concepts and theory

In approaching the idea of “analytical frameworks” with future candidates, it may be very helpful to teachers to consult the marked IA samples with examiners’ comments which have been published in the TSM (*Teachers’ Support Materials*) publication, accessed from the Online Curriculum Centre (OCC) subject home page. The OCC subject forum frequently sees exchanges between teachers on questions of teaching theory and applying it to IA research and the OCC Teacher Resource Exchange lists many likely sources from anthropology literature, as well as from teachers’ own study and practice.

### Sensitivity to ethical issues

Criterion E makes it clear that candidates are expected to address ethical issues emerging from the research process. To improve performance under this criterion, teachers should convey to candidates the concerns which have become increasingly prominent in published ethnography over the past 40 years, namely the increasingly serious attention paid to issues of representation, positionality, and reflexivity. These issues should be part of the common discourse as teachers present any ethnography to their classes.

### Teacher's comments on candidate reports

While not a requirement under the component, the inclusion of comments with the 3/CS form, practiced by a minority of teachers, can be very useful to the moderator. The teacher's comments help to clarify the application of the criteria, and thus helps the moderator in shaping recommendations for future teaching. Teachers are however strongly urged to clarify on the 3/CS form or an addendum the circumstances under which group work was undertaken, if applicable. When this is lacking, it may be difficult for the moderator to determine just what sort of collaboration took place between candidates.

## 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 - 13	14 - 15	16 - 20

### The range and suitability of the work submitted

The range of work seen in the samples was large, both in terms of overall presentation and the extent of anthropological knowledge and understanding demonstrated. Requirements for this component seem to be generally understood, although the nature and purpose of the critique continues as in previous years to be problematic for a very small number of internal assessments (IAs). The majority of samples seen suggest that candidates are able to identify appropriate sites for the observation, and their reports are usually quite successful. In the vast majority of the IAs, the critiques were also generally effective in demonstrating the candidates' efforts to think more critically about their initial report, rather than elaborating further on the event/site observed.

### Candidate performance against each criterion

As was the case in previous years, candidates were usually most successful on criterion A (the detail and organization of their observation report), and on criterion C (focus, assumptions and bias). However as noted in last year's report, the simple chronological notation of observations every five minutes is not sufficient to produce a report that is "well organized", yet continues to be used in some cases. Less effective observation reports usually lacked detail and were more dependent on previous knowledge, and sometimes self-reflection than specific observation, providing much less detail overall.

However criterion B – the distinction between description and analysis, continues to present problems, with many samples making no reference or very minimal reference to these terms at all. Yet quite often candidates were given quite generous internal marks for this, suggesting that this is a problem for at least some teachers as well as candidates.

With criterion C, those who had written more detailed reports were usually more successful in identifying relevant examples in terms of recognizing some of their assumptions and biases. This session these were also generally more effectively linked to the social position of the observer in terms of class, gender and sometimes ethnicity or race, rather than seen as simply personal opinions.

Finally performance on criterion D varied widely; at the lower end there was little evidence of anthropological concepts or understanding of some of the relevant methodological issues, but other critiques were able to identify and apply relevant terms to their own written accounts quite thoughtfully.

## Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

These remain very similar to previous years and need to be closely linked to ongoing classroom work with, and discussion of, the nature of ethnographic materials.

- Candidates should be helped to understand why simple chronological notation every 5 minutes does NOT constitute organization, presenting data more or less in “raw” list form.
- The distinction between ethnographic description and analysis needs to be examined constantly in the classroom, if it is to be successfully recognized, and examined in the critique. From many samples seen, this needs urgent attention in most centres.
- Although this year more candidates recognized that some of their assumptions and biases had a social or cultural component and were not just personal responses, this too should be an area of examination in terms of class ethnographies, as well as candidates own reports.
- This seems to be generally the case but worth a reminder that candidates should be familiar with the assessment criteria and be aware of the word limits and the consequences for exceeding these.

## 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 - 7	8 - 9	10 - 12	13 - 14	15 - 20

**PLEASE NOTE: That some of the comments from the standard level paper one report pages 18–21 are equally applicable here.**

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

Candidate performance appeared to be better than that of previous November sessions with the majority of candidates able to attempt all questions on the paper. Identifying the viewpoint of the anthropologist was the main area which could be improved.

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

Almost all candidates showed good knowledge of an ethnography to draw on for comparative purposes. Most presented convincing arguments for the relevance of this. The quality of these ethnographies was generally better than in previous sessions, with most of them being relatively recent.

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

#### Question 1

Many candidate lost marks here by failing to make generalizations, or by making generalizations which were so general as to be meaningless. Even mentioning “globalization”, along with a sentence or so to demonstrate understanding of the concept, would be enough to achieve an extra mark or two. Although several candidates simply repeated the text, most were able to articulate their response in their own words.

#### Question 2

The viewpoint of the anthropologist was missing from many responses, and simply stating that it was “diachronic” was not enough. However, it was good to see that most candidates were able to invoke relevant theories and concepts.

#### Question 3

As stated above, most candidates had good ethnographies to draw upon. However, several used film sources which were not entirely ethnographic, or seemed to collapse two different ethnographic sources into one.

## Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- Encourage future candidates to try to recognize the viewpoints of anthropologists, using a little more sophistication (for example, identifying “cohesion centred” or “conflict centred” if appropriate to the material).
- Encourage future candidates to look at what generalizations can be made in relation to the materials they study.

## Further comments

It would be good to receive more teacher feedback via the G2 on this and other papers.

## Higher level paper two

### Component grade boundaries

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 6	7 - 13	14 - 17	18 - 22	23 - 26	27 - 31	32 - 44

### General comments

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

A small number of candidates wrote on only two societies and/or used exactly the same ethnographic material in both essays. Some candidates wrote essays that were not clearly focused on the examination questions and often appeared to re-produce essays which had been pre-prepared only slightly, if at all, adapted for the examination. These essays were often lacking in relevance as they did not fully answer the question on the paper even when they were sound answers in their own terms.

Many candidates began their answers with pre-prepared paragraphs which linked the concepts in the examination questions to general theoretical perspectives, to fundamental theoretical issues (FTIs) (which are no longer a part of the current curriculum), and to broad anthropological themes. Unfortunately, in many cases this was the only reference to conceptual or theoretical material in the scripts and it was often not linked to the descriptive ethnographic material which followed. Some candidates spent so much of their time in writing these lengthy introductions to their chosen question that they did not produce sufficient material to answer the question itself.

In some instances candidates used theoretical perspectives and theories which were not best suited to answering the questions they chose. The knowledge to select an appropriate theoretical perspective is one that these candidates appeared to lack particularly when more contemporary theories and approaches to anthropological materials would have served well. It appears that many candidates do not have a solid grounding in theories and theoretical perspectives from the last 40 or so years.

Weaker scripts lacked theoretical and conceptual knowledge, or used anthropological concepts in ways that did not help to explain the ethnographic materials presented.

Some candidates either failed to make clear which option they had chosen to answer on for the questions where alternatives were possible, or alternatively wrote scripts that seemed to attempt several of the possible options in the same essay.

Occasionally, candidates misunderstood a term in a question or answered at a tangent to the requirements of the question. For example, one candidate wrote on "social movements" but described migration as their ethnographic case of "social movement".



Some of the same key areas of the programme as in previous sessions continue to prove difficult for some candidates and these relate to the definitions of central concepts and terms in questions; the ability to apply this knowledge to ethnographic data and to the question in a relevant manner; and the interweaving of relevant theory and ethnography.

### **Defining terms**

The central concepts appearing in questions were often undefined, poorly defined, or only partially defined. These terms, such as “gender” (still referred to as a biological concept in some cases), “social movement”, “kinship”, “socialization” *etc* were often not clearly defined and this left candidates either struggling to make their answers relevant to the question or simply ignoring their own definitions in the remainder of the script.

### **Application of theory**

Centres varied widely in the ability shown by candidates to carry out theoretically informed discussions with some candidates using no explicit theory and producing almost entirely descriptive answers. Alternatively, many candidates had pre-prepared standard “theory” paragraphs memorized and reproduced for the start of each answer. There was often a sense that such “ready-made” introductions to essays did not reflect any genuine understandings of theory, theoretical perspectives, or ability to apply and think with this information in order to answer the questions on the examination paper in a manner that demonstrated knowledge and an ability to apply this knowledge appropriately.

### **Ability to answer all parts of a question**

Candidates sometimes ignored key words in a question or focused on one part of the question to the detriment of the rest. For example, in question one, the key term “environment” was often ignored in essays that otherwise dealt reasonably well with politics, economics or religion.

## **The levels of knowledge, understanding and skill demonstrated**

As ever, some candidates produced extremely good work demonstrating detailed levels of knowledge and skill in answering the questions. These candidates had a sound range and understanding of anthropological theory, a keen ability to select and use relevant concepts and detailed knowledge of several ethnographies which they were able to draw on to produce detailed, reasoned, sound and thoughtful essays. A positive feature in this examination session was the detailed knowledge some candidates demonstrated on ritual and politics, often focusing on rituals of kingship which they were able to discuss not only in ethnographic terms but also to critique theoretically.

At the other extreme, however, some candidates were only able to show what appeared to be rote learning of anthropological information that rarely demonstrated any genuine knowledge and understanding. Several candidates did not write on a sufficient number of societies across

their two essays, a few used exactly the same material in both answers and this meant that the material was inevitably less relevant for one of the two selected questions.

In this examination session it was clear that more candidates are more aware of and attempting to meet assessment criteria D and E (demonstrating knowledge of processes of change and transformation within and across cultures and societies and breadth of knowledge of societies). However, in some cases this awareness was limited to a sentence added to the end of a script to mention change of some sort, sometimes of a fairly insignificant nature and in at least one case to explicitly state that nothing had ever changed in the society discussed in the essay. As with the requirement to link relevant theory and concepts to relevant ethnographic material future candidates should be encouraged not simply to pay lip service to “change and transformation” by including a standard memorized and universally applicable sentence in their essays, but to incorporate an understanding of social processes of change over time as a part of all their work and to integrate this into their essays as a matter of course.

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

### Question 1

This was a relatively popular question on the paper and many candidates chose this as one of their questions with religion and colonialism as the least popular of the options. The main issue with this question was the lack of reference to environment in many of the answers. Candidates were usually able to write on political organization or economic organization, but struggled to link these in a meaningful way to the environment. Better answers dealt with how impoverished people living in shantytowns made sense of the environmental pollution caused by industry in their environment and the health consequences that resulted from this. The best of these answers were able to consider local understandings of health and toxic environments from multiple perspectives. Other candidates answered this question using the Ju/'Hoansi and Lee's ethnography to consider what happens to a population as it moves from a nomadic to a sedentary lifestyle. Changes in both economic and political organization were covered using Lee's work. Few candidates chose to answer this question by focusing on religion and those who did often produced rather vague and over-generalized essays linking religious notions to the sacred duty to protect the environment.

### Question 2

For this popular question candidates selected from a range of appropriate ethnographies including Bourgois (*In Search of Respect*) and Weiner's work on the Trobrianders. Many candidates wrote sound and sometimes extremely good essays using these texts. However, some of the essays using the Trobriand material contrasted this with some now rather older ethnographic work set in a rural Iraqi village which tended to produce oversimplified comparisons of the place of women in society. Some very good answers used Scheper-Hughes's material on rural Irish families and mental health problems. In many answers kinship was, however, often

sidelined in favour of essays that were dominated by discussion of either gender or inequality almost to the exclusion of kinship altogether. These essays sometimes read as though candidates were reproducing class essays on gender or inequality to which they added an occasional comment about kinship.

Candidates who wrote on inequality did not always define this term or were unable to distinguish between inequality and difference, and those who wrote on gender sometimes considered this a biological matter rather than a social one.

### Question 3

Globalization and resistance were the most popular of the options on this question with group identity and either globalization or colonialism next. The least popular option was commodification. For globalization and group identity a significant number of candidates chose to focus on tourism as an aspect of globalization and this part of the essay usually worked reasonably well. Linking tourism and globalization to group identity or resistance proved to be more of a challenge for many of the candidates. Very few candidates indeed had any clear knowledge of theoretical work on resistance or identity and so were left to use these terms in commonsense ways. None were able to cite, for example, Scott's work on weapons of the weak. This meant that while the descriptive ethnographic materials were often sound, candidates were not able to develop conceptual discussions beyond a fairly rudimentary level. Popular ethnographic work used to answer this question and these options included Bruner's article on the Masai and Lee's ethnography on the Ju/'Hoansi for both group identity and resistance. Very occasionally weaker scripts appeared to attempt to write on human suffering, group identity and resistance in the same answer.

### Question 4

This question produced answers that at one extreme were very good with sound understandings of socialization processes which were developed comparatively throughout the scripts and at the other extreme scripts that did not manage to rise above the commonsense and often revealed the cultural assumptions and limitations of a candidate's own background. Some candidates chose to focus on socialization through rites of passage in two distinct societies and this often worked well. The chosen societies included the Balinese and also often compared the socialization of females and males across two societies (so a double comparison females in one society contrasted to females in a second society and the same for males). Some candidates chose to use Bourgois material on the Puerto Ricans to show how males in particular are socialized in El Barrio. Another ethnography which was popular in terms of socialization processes was that of *The Traveller-Gypsies* by Okely.

### Question 5

Candidates who did well on this question were those who were able to define and then use "agency" well explicitly linking this knowledge to particular economic systems. Once more Bourgois's work on El Barrio was a popular choice with stronger essays demonstrating how agency is limited for some Puerto Rican migrants by a

racist and discriminatory social structure. Better answers focused on both agency and economic organization in a balanced fashion, while less strong answers tended to choose one or other key term in the question and to write on this at length.

### Question 6

There were several very good scripts for this question and mostly the better scripts wrote on dual kingship systems found in some traditional African societies. Here rituals that linked the rulers (usually a king and his mother or consort) with aspects of nature and fertility such as rain and the necessity of a king / queen in order to ensure the harmony of the natural cycle were especially clear in the connection between ritual and politics. Often candidates who wrote on this topic were also those who were able convincingly to present reasoned evaluations of the limitations of the theoretical perspectives of anthropologists such as Kuper who had conducted fieldwork during the colonial era on kingship.

### Question 7

Again, with this question while candidates were often able to select a suitable ethnography such as Bourgois *In Search of Respect*, or Bruner's work on tourism in Kenya, virtually no candidate was able to theorize power in any very detailed manner. No candidate discussed in any detailed way how power might be conceptualized when a range of theorists from Weber to Foucault could have been introduced to provide a sound conceptual framework for many of the essays. This was a pity as candidates often had a reasonable understanding of how power might provide a means to understand aspects of either migration or tourism and which could, with little additional study, have made it possible for some candidates to produce very good essays. A small number of candidates tried to grapple with the impact of representation as a form of power and control over which some relatively powerless groups in society had little control.

### Question 8

In descriptive terms candidates were often able to state with examples what kind of work women do and what kind of work men do in a range of societies from hunter-gatherer to horticultural and modern urban. However, very few candidates had the conceptual or theoretical knowledge to be able to do much more than describe the division of labour and this meant that answers were limited. Very few were able to discuss debates on public/private divides, or explicitly to consider feminist theories rethinking how some more traditional material has perhaps not always represented the labour of women in an unbiased fashion. Again, this was a pity as with some now relatively accessible and mainstream anthropological materials many of the essays which did only reasonably for this question could have been much improved. As with many of the other questions for this paper the ethnographies chosen to answer this question were often Lee's works on the Ju/'Hoansi, Weiner's Trobriand material or ethnographic work on the Kuna of Panama.

### Question 9

The candidates who wrote on this question typically chose Lee's work on the Ju/'Hoansi and described the changes from hunter-gatherer lifestyle to sedentary ones. Others chose to work on the Kuna and described the mola art work made by women for the tourist trade. Some candidates chose to write on how modernity has not affected local exchange systems and mainly cited the case of the Trobrianders when this position was taken. A general strength of the answers to this question was that better essays did distinguish local from other exchange systems and some candidates were able to describe a variety of local exchange systems which were in place at the same time and in use by the same people, but which served different social and economic purposes. These answers, while often remaining fairly descriptive, did demonstrate a level of detailed knowledge that showed understanding of the complexities of particular exchange systems. The limitation of these answers, however, was that candidates did not generally have a strong conceptual grasp of what was meant by modernity other than to consider this as something that has happened in recent decades. Occasionally, some vague idea of the "modern" was contrasted with some equally generalized notion of "tradition".

### Question 10

This was a popular question with the "inequality" option as the most frequent choice and "belief systems" as the least chosen option. Inequality was mostly presented as economic inequality sometimes associated with ethnicity and race (in the case of the Puerto Ricans in El Barrio), or linked to colonial practices with indigenous groups found in South America (often Argentina and Panama). One candidate misunderstood "social movement" and took this to mean migration which produced an essay that unfortunately did not answer the question. In terms of systems of production and consumption, candidates often considered ethnographic cases of production for tourist consumption or how production had changed for hunter-gatherers as a consequence of sedentarization. Often, however, candidates did not focus sufficiently on what a "system" might entail and while production was often reasonably well described, material on consumption was less well developed.

## Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- Candidates should be reminded that key terms used in questions must be defined, and applied to the ethnographies discussed in the essay.
- When a question has options to choose from it is in the best interest of the candidate to make clear which option is chosen and for the candidate to stick to this and not be tempted also to write on the other options given for a particular question.
- Teachers need to help candidates achieve a balance between ethnographic description and theoretical exposition and analysis. This works best when the concepts are closely linked to ethnographic material so that candidates can see how

the concepts help to explain the descriptive materials they read.

- Candidates should be discouraged from attempting to answer a question on a topic that they have not studied or which is similar to, but not quite the same, as a class essay they have already prepared unless they are able to adapt this sufficiently to answer the question that is set on the paper.
- Candidates need to be introduced to a broad range of anthropological theories and concepts as well as to ethnographies which serve to link with or exemplify the theories candidates are taught. In particular, centres should endeavour to ensure that candidates are given sufficient time during the course of their studies to become familiar with some more contemporary ethnographies and some of the more recent theoretical developments in the discipline. In this respect it might be advisable not to teach theories chronologically beginning with the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century as appears to happen in some cases, but to introduce contemporary ethnographies using contemporary theories early in teaching and to only bring in older theories as and when required, or as part of some more explicitly “history of anthropology” sessions during the course of study.
- Candidates should be strongly encouraged to answer all parts of a question and not to only write on the one part that they know more about.

## 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

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

Generally, making coherent and relevant connections between the three components examined in this paper remains a challenge for many. As was the case in November 2011, the most common difficulty was connecting theoretical schools of thought with ethnography, which quite often meant that their relevance to the question was only weakly established. Rather often, description of schools of thought seemed to be recognized as a necessary component, which is the case, but once briefly summarized, sometimes in relation to a theoretical perspective, these were put aside as if of no further relevance. As one consequence of this, connections between theory or theoretical perspectives and ethnography often seemed rather artificial or mechanical, rather than the result of a genuine inquiry. The other limitation common to many responses was the lack of attention to context, either historical in reference to theoretical schools or ethnographic; this was particularly a problem with the use of Bruner's materials on the Maasai (2001). More specific limitations included some clearly memorized introductions and some continued reference to pairs of fundamental theoretical issues rather than theoretical perspectives, which sometimes led to lack of close focus in terms of the questions.

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

Despite the limitations noted above it was encouraging to see an improvement in the overall performance this session, with strong and thoughtful responses evident, if still in small numbers, for each of the five questions. It was clear that most candidates had some general understanding of the requirements of the paper, as well as some knowledge of relevant theory/theoretical schools, theoretical perspectives and ethnography. It was also good to see reference to some more current ethnographic materials, including Piot's study of the Kabre in northern Togo (1999) and Swain's study of the Kuna in the San Blas Islands of Panama (1989).

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

### Question 1

This was a popular and quite demanding question and candidates who chose this were usually able to demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of two of these theoretical schools. However they were not always as successful in linking these to theoretical perspectives and ethnography, producing a wide range of answers. A few strong responses were anthropologically informed and well argued, developing systematic comparisons as required by the question. More usually, responses fell into the middle range which were more or less effective in different ways but struggled with at least one of the three components. A small number of candidates struggled to make much sense of what they “knew”. While many were more or less successful in being able to demonstrate at least some knowledge of two of the specified theoretical schools and to name (a) relevant theoretical perspective(s), applying these to ethnographic materials was often much more problematic.

### Question 2

This was one of the two most popular questions and relatively straightforward, producing a wide range of answers, though perhaps somewhat more predictable than those to question 1. The most successful answers moved beyond simple assertions of the value of “detailed description and deep analysis” often linked to a synchronic perspective, to demonstrate this in relation to well-detailed ethnography which was linked to theory, and placed in a critical context. More usually, while most responses recognized the lack of historical perspective as a limitation, this was asserted rather than explored or demonstrated. In particular, Lee's Ju/'hoansi ethnography was sometimes quite well used here.

### Question 3

This question was least often chosen but produced several effective answers, most often focused on diachronic or conflict / cohesion perspectives. Other responses were rather uneven, and more effective in relation to one or other of the ethnographers chosen.

### Question 4

This question was also not very often chosen. Responses were most effective in demonstrating some understanding of one or both of the two theoretical perspectives and relevant theoretical schools, but generally found it more difficult to directly link this to one of the themes identified for discussion. The most successful responses made effective use of Bourgois' ethnography in relation to both power and globalization.



### Question 5

This was quite a popular question and the most successful overall, perhaps because of a narrower focus which seemed to allow candidates to make more effective links between the three key components of this paper. In particular, discussions of the work of Bourgois or Piot were quite successful here.

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

- The challenge of this paper is for candidates to be able to think and write with and about theoretical perspectives and schools of thought in relation to ethnography, to demonstrate an understanding of some of the ways in which perspectives and schools shape ethnography. As noted above, rather often the application of perspectives and/or of schools of thought to ethnography seems somewhat forced, suggesting that they have been studied in isolation rather than together, and as closely connected. Thus the challenge for the teacher is to find ways to integrate the teaching of theoretical perspectives and schools of thought with ethnography, making the choice of course ethnographies particularly important.
- While it is encouraging to see that most candidates are able to offer some kind of description of some perspectives and schools of thought, in some cases this still appears to be learned or memorized rather than well understood, which makes application to ethnography difficult. Again, classroom integration in terms of teaching all three components could make a difference here.

## 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 - 7	8 - 10	11 - 12	13 - 15	16 - 20

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

Overall, the majority of candidates were able to demonstrate a general understanding of the text – in this case, an extract which examines how American rap, as a global phenomenon, is adapted in a local context.

Some answers, however, remained on a descriptive level or were quite dependent on the text. Some candidates appeared unaware that they should be using their own words to demonstrate an understanding of the anthropological concepts involved. Not many candidates attempted to define or discuss key concepts (eg globalization, localization, hybridity, scapes, flows, creolization, group identity) relevant to the questions. Thus many answers were more descriptive than analytical and did not provide sufficient contextualization of ethnographic materials leading, in many cases, to limited arguments and rather superficial comparisons.

Another significant weakness, though for only a few candidates, was relying too heavily on materials from earlier periods of anthropology; this resulted in a lack of relevance to the analysis of this particular extract. The apparent lack of more updated ethnographic texts and conceptual frameworks obliged candidates to struggle to make their answers relevant to the questions (attempting to discuss this extract from social evolutionism is unlikely to produce a successful response).

In a small number of cases, candidates were not able to complete all the questions on the paper. Question 3 in particular was sometimes left unfinished, or so brief as to be too short to gain a good mark.

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

In terms of areas of the programme, many candidates appeared to be familiar with anthropological concepts and issues related to the extract chosen. Processes of interaction and cultural change within the context of modernity and globalization seems to be an area of study covered by many centres, though in terms of conceptualization, globalization and localization they were rather often treated very generally. Thus, the range of achievement was generally related to the ability to discuss and apply specifically anthropological concepts and approaches and to develop answers that were analytical and anthropologically informed.

It is pleasing to see that many candidates were able to make sound statements about the viewpoint of the anthropologist, giving evidence of teachers preparing candidates in this aspect. The performance of some new centres was quite encouraging, suggesting that sound teaching programmes are in place. It is promising to read a good range of well-structured answers drawing on several updated, contemporary ethnographies across the candidate cohort. These candidates showed an ability to produce convincing comparisons supported by relevant, fully contextualized ethnographies.

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

### Question 1

Most candidates seemed capable of identifying relevant points/examples, but generalizations were limited. The more successful responses presented relevant generalizations and examples, but others were rather dependent on the text itself. Many candidates were able to highlight the similarities and differences between older and younger generations' understandings of rap in Burma and in the US, but only a few offered generalizations, demonstrating good anthropological understanding.

Weaker scripts relied heavily upon the text and quoted answers rather than summarized in the candidates' own words. A small number of answers were composed almost entirely of quotations from the set text. A few candidates introduced a comparative ethnography in this question, which is not required.

### Question 2

Stronger answers provided detailed analysis and demonstrated how Burmese rap has been locally adapted, analysing the local grounding of Burmese rap in comparison to American rap. Some candidates demonstrated a sound understanding of relevant concepts but many responses were only descriptive, and demonstrated limited understanding of relevant anthropological issues and concepts.

It was very pleasing to see that there was a more comprehensive attempt across candidates to include the viewpoint of the anthropologist in the response to this question. Some answers discussed it in terms of emic/etic distinctions, others considered the anthropologist to be potentially biased in various respects, and when this was well justified the response was given credit.

A few introduced a comparative ethnography in this question, which was not required.

### Question 3

Many candidates were able to produce good responses to this question. The majority structured their answers as a comparison and at least attempted to introduce a comparative ethnography. Candidates who did particularly well on this question often did so because they chose well-contextualized and relevant comparative ethnographies.

Those who did not do so well often appeared to have ignored the focus of the question which was on how a group uses a cultural practice from outside its own culture, analysing the transformations involved in the process. Another weakness was related to answers being more narrative than comparative in nature and structure. Some candidates extensively developed a description of the chosen ethnography disregarding the basic requirement that is to establish a comparison, based on similarities and differences.

It was pleasing to see that many centres are incorporating some more contemporary materials into their readings which provided opportunities for relevant discussions and comparisons. Popular ethnographies chosen were Bourgois' *In Search of Respect*, Okely's *The Traveller-Gypsies*, Lee's *The Dobe Ju/'hoansi*, Weiner's *The Trobrianders of Papua New Guinea*, Michitaro Tada's *Japanese Gestures*, Charles Piot's *Remotely Global: Village Modernity in West Africa*, Karen Nakamura's *Deaf in Japan: Signing and the Politics of Identity*, Sercombe and Sellato (eds.)'s *Beyond the Green Myth: Borneo's Hunter-Gatherers in the Twenty First Century*. All these provided relevant materials for comparison. A small proportion of candidates referred to past paper 1 materials – often without naming the ethnographer or accurately locating the people referred to as an ethnographic case study. While material from past paper 1s are clearly helpful in the preparation of candidates for the examinations, these extracts should not be the only material some candidates appear to be able to remember as their ethnographic texts.

Some candidates did not fully contextualize their ethnographic materials. Quite often a candidate would only mention a very generic reference to a group of people, without any identification in terms of place, author or historical context. A publication date for ethnography is not necessarily what is meant by ethnographic contextualization, but the description of the historical context of the ethnographic account.

Finally, some candidates would introduce two different ethnographies even though the question specified that only one such group should be introduced. In very few cases no ethnography was cited at all.

## Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- In terms of examination skills, candidates should be reminded to read the questions carefully and structure their answers accordingly. Practice with previous paper 1 texts and markschemes is critical to this goal. Candidates should be encouraged to be explicit in demonstrating their understanding of concepts by, for example, defining the terms used. Candidates should make sure they are actually answering the questions, and be aware that question 1 is usually descriptive but question 2 is more analytical.
- Teachers 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.

- In question 1, candidates need to use their own words rather than rely heavily on quotations. Candidates are expected to go beyond simple description, to develop some generalizations that are relevant to the terms of the question and can be linked to relevant points and examples given in the text.
- In question 2, in order to gain full marks, candidates should be encouraged to work on developing their analytical skills so that they can move beyond merely offering descriptive responses.
- In question 3, candidates should learn to present a comparative ethnography in terms of author, place, and historical context. Many candidates missed out on receiving more than 4 marks for this question because they seemed unaware of the need to present the ethnography in full detail.
- Overall, candidates should be able to discuss and develop a conceptual understanding of the ethnographic materials they read. It is this conceptual framework that will enable them to discuss the ethnographic materials more effectively and critically.
- Finally, in terms of ethnographic materials, it is important that teachers try to ensure that candidates are familiar with some contemporary ethnographic works. In the last half century a great deal of very good material has been published by anthropologists and it is a pity that candidates are not always given the opportunity to read some of this more recent work in addition to classic older material.

## Standard level paper two

### Component grade boundaries

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 5	6 - 10	11 - 15	16 - 21	22 - 27	28 - 33	34 - 44

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

As was the case in November 2011, though with some notable exceptions this session, a lack of explicit discussion of relevant anthropological concepts or approaches continue to be a considerable limitation contributing to many responses that were more descriptive than analytical. As noted last year, key terms such as group identity (question 3), commodification (question 3), power (question 7) or gender (question 8) that required definition and discussion continued to be treated as if self evident. Although candidates were usually able to use these terms in relation to other, usually ethnographic materials, there was little specifically anthropological knowledge in evidence. Similarly, while comparisons were sometimes present or at least implicit in many responses, there was little systematic or focused comparative writing except in answers to question 4 which explicitly required it. Given that both conceptual knowledge and analysis (criterion A) and comparisons (criterion C) are two key assessment criteria this is of some concern.

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

In terms of the programme, it was encouraging that the pattern of question choices suggested that many candidates were most confident in writing about different forms of social change and transformation: questions 3 (most often focused on globalization and resistance or group identity) and 10 (most often focused on new forms of inequality or belief systems) accounted for almost 50% of all responses. Although some of these responses were uneven, it was clear that a good many candidates either had considerable knowledge of different approaches to and arguments about globalization and/or quite detailed ethnographic knowledge of relevant cases including materials on the Kayapo (Brazil), the Pennan (Malaysia), Nuyoricans in El Barrio New York or the Hmong in California (US), all of which were quite often used effectively.

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

#### Question 1

The candidates' responses most often focused on the relation between the environment and religion, especially ritual. Some candidates relied on Harris' Cows,

*Pigs, Wars and Witches* which was sometimes but not always put to good use. Other materials quite well used included Leinhardt's account of the Dinka. However in other cases, such as Okely's Traveller-Gypsies (Britain) and work on the Toraja (Indonesia), the link to the environment was not clearly established.

### Question 2

The candidates' responses were more successful in demonstrating knowledge of gender or inequality rather than the relationship of either to kinship, where relevant knowledge seemed quite limited. Thus responses were not really made relevant to the question.

### Question 3

Responses to this popular question were usually focused on globalization in relation to resistance or to group identity. Essays about globalization and resistance, often focused on the case of the Kayapo and sometimes Bourgois' ethnography of Nuyoricans in New York, were quite effective in demonstrating knowledge and some understanding, but not always well balanced: conceptual discussion often overwhelmed and was not connected to ethnography. Responses to globalization and group identity were often more successful, with some very interesting writing with materials about the *Deaf in Japan*, the Pennan of Malaysia, and identity in Singapore, which were very well used.

### Question 4

The vast majority of responses were conceptually and ethnographically informed, making thoughtful use of ethnographic materials on the *Deaf in Japan*, usually contrasted with Fadiman's non-ethnographic account of the Hmong in California.

### Question 5

The single response was limited by a lack of conceptual knowledge and comparisons.

### Question 6

Of the 4 responses, two used knowledge of relevant ethnographic material – Kuper's account of the Swazi or a comparison of Singapore and the Hmong to construct effective answers. The other responses had trouble in addressing both parts of the question, demonstrating ethnographic knowledge of ritual but struggling to show any political function or meaning.

### Question 7

Candidates usually focused on the relation between power and migration, using Chavez' ethnography or Fadiman's non-ethnographic account of the Hmong. Those familiar with Fadiman's account were more effective in terms of the question and the conceptual and ethnographic knowledge and understanding demonstrated.

**Question 8**

This was the most popular question but produced largely descriptive rather than analytical responses: anthropological conceptualization was often limited and comparison was more implicit than examined. Fortunately candidates were able to draw from a wide range of ethnographies; more successful responses made quite effective use of Kray's discussion of Mayan women, Bourgois' of Nuyorican women, Okely's Traveller-Gypsies or Weiner's Trobriand materials (Papua New Guinea). Responses working with Chagnon's Yanomamo ethnography (Brazil/Venezuela), Friedman's discussion of the Nukumanu (Polynesia), Harner's account of the Shuar (Ecuador) and Lee Ju/'Hoansi materials (Botswana/Nambia) were usually less effectively presented.

**Question 9**

There were two very different responses. Both took modernity at face value with little anthropological discussion; otherwise one was very well informed conceptually about exchange systems in general, but offered ethnography of limited relevance, the other described relevant ethnographic materials, for example on the Saami of Finland – but without clear focus on local exchange systems.

**Question 10**

Responses to this popular question usually focused on new forms of inequality, and to a lesser extent, belief systems. Those focused on new forms of inequality were most successful, producing informed and focused discussions of the Pennan in Malaysia in the context of globalization and logging, of the Hmong and Nuyoricans in the US as immigrant communities, and of the *Deaf in Japan*.

## Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- The key to effective responses is the candidates' knowledge and understanding of anthropological concepts given in the question that can then be applied to relevant ethnographic materials to establish a framework for both analysis and comparison. Ethnographic description alone, however well detailed and essential, is not sufficient. How to balance and connect these two key components needs to be examined and constantly reinforced and practiced in the classroom.
- That said, it is also essential that candidates are familiar with and confident in their knowledge and understanding of detailed ethnographic materials to support and illustrate more general arguments or claims. It perhaps needs to be emphasized that short extracts, including previous texts from paper 1, or summaries provided in some general text books, are rarely sufficient in themselves to provide the kind of detailed understanding required. They may be useful as a starting point for inquiry or to complement or supplement other ethnographies but cannot be substituted for them.



- Candidates also need to understand that comparisons (internal and/or external) need to be systematic and made explicit in every essay, whether or not the question is formally comparative. Again how to do this need to be part of classroom discussion and frequent practice.
- Finally, it is important that candidates are familiar with, and understand, assessment criteria D and E, requiring demonstrated knowledge of processes of change and transformation as well as detailed knowledge of at least three societies over both essays. It is recommended that teachers find ways to include these criteria in their own assessment practices.