IGCSE

Edexcel GCSE

Geography (4370)

This Examiners' Report relates to Mark
Scheme Publication code: UG018564

November 2006

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IGCSE GEOGRAPHY REPORT – 1F
November 2006

General Comments
This second winter sitting of the examination again attracted only a very small entry.
These few scripts though were of a very respectable standard. They were complete
and showed both adherence to the rubric and a degree of geographical competence.

Specific Comments

Question 1: Water
This was one of the better scoring questions. It was usual for candidates to start
strongly by reading Figure 1(a)(ii) as these were the main reasons for collecting and
storing water ((b)). Part (c) did differentiate candidate ability but broadly speaking,
the impact that a dam had on discharge was understood.

Question 2: Hazards
This question scored relatively well but was characterised by mixed quality. The
distinction between climatic and non-climatic was often not apparent in (a)(i) and
part (b) also proved a challenge. Full marks were universal in (c) but candidates
rarely got beyond level 1 in (d)(i). Disappointingly, answers tended to deal only with
the basics of plate movement. Candidates offered a broad idea of a suitable
response in (d)(ii) but typically responses were too generic.

Question 3: Production
This was not a high scoring question. The concepts of high-tech ((a)(i)) and market
((b)(i)) were known but those of green field site ((a)(iii)) and footloose ((b)(iii)) were
not. Limited use was made of Figure 3 in answering (a)(ii) and (a)(iii). It was felt
that knowledge and understanding of the locational factors behind modern industry
was sketchy. Part (c) was well done with the economic benefits brought by factories
very evident.

Question 4: Development
This was better answered than most of the development questions on previous
papers. Figure 4(a) completion was universally correct ((a)(i)) and NICs were known
by all ((a)(i)). Candidates were comfortable with energy use contrasts between
MEDCs and LEDCs. Pleasing also was the familiarity with the advantage that indexes
of development have over single indicators ((b)). In part (c) candidates were able to
score as they had some understanding of the development obstacles, especially
corruption and trade barriers.

Question 5: Migration
A higher scoring question but candidates tended to start by misreading Figure 5. 4000
is not the rate sought by question (a)(i). This was a common response. Equally,
(a)(ii) created some difficulties. The concept of a migration balance was not always
known. Thereafter, candidates scored well. The push-and-pull model and urban-to-
rural migration were well understood.

Question 6: Urban Environments
A moderately well answered question with candidates making good use of figure 6 in
their responses to part (a). All were able to offer valid reasons for shanty town
((a)(iii)) and industrial locations ((a)(iv)). As expected the features of a CBD were

known ((b)), and there was a general awareness of the problems caused by rapid LEDC urbanisation. Apart form lack of examples , part (c) was well answered.

In Section B of the paper all candidates answered Question 8. There were no responses to Questions 7 and 9 upon which to comment.

Question 8: Globalisation
In relation to the general standard of answering Section A questions (Questions 1 – 6), this was well answered. Parts (a) and (b) posed no difficulties for the candidates with maximum marks being typical. Reasons for the growth tourism were clear and well understood. Figure 8(b) was well read and the impacts of change, both positive and negative were very evident in the responses to part (c)(i) and (ii). These parts scored well. However, the (c)(iii) finale task generated rather limited answers. Candidates failed to offer suggestions beyond Level 1 in quality.

IGCSE GEOGRAPHY REPORT – 4370/2H
November 2006

General Comments
This second winter sitting of the examination again attracted only a modest sized entry but a high quality one. Many scripts were of a very pleasing quality. They were complete, relevant to the questions set, knowledgeable and written with an impressive command of English. The strongest scripts are a credit to centres and candidates.

Section A

Question 1: Water
A well answered and high-scoring question. Candidates generally started well with the terms, drainage basin, watershed and discharge being adequately defined in (a)(ii) and (b)(i). Suprisingly though, most candidates failed to opt for the correct area in (a)(iii). The broad impact that a dam has on discharge was evident in answers to (b)(ii) often scored better than its preceding question with ideas of storage and regulation generally being offered by the candidates. The final task generated a good range of valid responses with the basic purposes of management being known by all. Exemplification or lack of it was frequently the differentiator.

Question 2: Hazards
A high-scoring question at this tier. Almost all candidates started well with maximum marks for (a)(i) and in (a)(ii) pleasingly being able to distinguish between hazards and disasters. Similarly, part (b) was well answered in all three sub-sections. Earthquakes or volcanic eruptions were the popular choice. (B)(i) saw many good diagrams drawn, and the problems brought by the hazard and the impact of development on their scale were well understood and explained on the vast majority of scripts.

Question 3: Production
Generally speaking, a less well answered question. Candidates frequently failed to appreciate that "this" in the question meant the rest of the European Union; maximum mark answers were rare. The role of Greenfield sites and universities on hi-tech factory locations was often explained well but footloose was not known by a significant number of candidates. Part c was generally well answered but examples and other specific knowledge of the role of government in industrial location decision-making were at best, sketchy and frequently non-existent in part (d).

Question 4: Development
As was noted in the tier F report, this examination saw the development question better answered than in previous examinations. Almost all candidates made a strong start with maximum marks in (a)(i) and life expectancy influences ((a)(ii)) and development indexes ((b)) being familiar to the candidates. The concept of an obstacle to development was known to most candidates who were able to outline in most cases how two worked. Again, most candidates adequately explained development in one named country in part (d).

Question 5: Migration
Despite being a high scoring question overall, most candidates failed to identify the correct rate for (a)(i). 4000 was not the correct rate. Most, however, understood the net migration concept sought by (a)(ii) and there was partial understanding in answers to (a)(iii) of the link between migration and the state of the economy.

Responses to (b) were either well done or irrelevant as candidates dealt with pull factors. Urban-to-rural migration ((c)) was a well prepared topic; responses on both its causes and its consequences were on the whole, very sound.

Question 6: Urban environments
This along with question 3 was a less well answered question. Few candidates scored maximum marks in part (a). Their use of Figure 6 was adequate but application of it's content to the actual questions set was often lacking. Part (b)(i) was the best done within this question . Few, however, knew of an appropriate LEDC urban scheme or schemes; responses tended to be disappointingly vague and generic.

Section B
All three questions had candidates opting for them. All were answered at high standard when compared to Section A general standards.

Question 7: Fragile environments
This was the slightly more popular option. Part (a) generally produced maximum marks. The essence of part(b) was understood by all candidates. There were many good answers on the effects of deforestation, especially with regard to the global environment. The examples requested by(c) were in the main, not strong on most scripts; few detailed schemes of sustainable management were offered. Part (d) differentiated though there were too many Level 1 only responses which gave generic reasons plus some repetition of their answer to part (b), and failed to address social problems caused and explanation of the situation in a any specific country.

Question 8: Globalisation
A generally well answered question. Parts (a) to (b)(iii) were universally well done. The growth, advantages and disadvantages of international tourism are a popular topic, generally well taught and here showed an encouragingly high level of knowledge and understanding. Part (a)(iv) required the candidate to think and as such differentiated well; disappointingly, some candidates were able to offer very little for inclusion in the management plan. The final, 9-mark task proved to be rather challenging; responses beyond Level 1 were rare. There was little evidence to suggest that sustainability, an overarching concept across the three optional units in the specification, had been taught in the context of global tourism.

Question 9: Human welfare
The least popular of the three options. Parts (a) and (b) usually scored well with candidates showing an ability to use Figures 9(a) and 9(b) effectively. Part (c) was well answered with most focusing their response on natural change, often birth rates. China's one-child policy dominated the responses to (d)(i); there was a good range of quality here with the best scripts hitting Level 3. The provisions of the policy were better known than its rationale and shortcomings. Part (d)(ii) was not a high scoring finale; broad Level 1 comments lacking specific reference were all too common.

IGCSE GEOGRAPHY REPORT – 03
November 2006

General comments

The skills based paper, offered as an alternative to coursework, was well received by centres and candidates. Approximately two thirds of the November 2006 cohort was entered for Paper 3, which was common to both the Foundation and Higher tiers. The majority of the candidates displayed a pleasing range of geographical skills and were able to complete the paper within the time limit of 1hour and 15 minutes.

The paper proved to be accessible to those entered for the Foundation Tier but also enabled Higher Tier candidates to achieve highly. The majority of centres deserve praise for the thorough way in which they prepared their candidates for this paper although there some concern remains about a number of the topics selected for centre based fieldwork.

Questions 1 and 2

Both these questions required the candidates to use a variety of resources and geographical skills. The majority of candidates were more familiar with the skills required for Question 1 and therefore tended to find this question more accessible.

The basic map reading section at the start of Question 1 presented few problems and enabled candidates to make a good start to the paper. Candidates demonstrated proficiency when completing the graph, b(i), and there were some excellent responses to b(ii), the following being an example of a detailed level two response:-
'I agree, as can be seen in the third column of Figure 1(b) 5 of the 7 services are used by locals as opposed 4 of 7 by visitors. However, Figure 1(c) indicates those services most necessary to locals are few in number(post offices, public telephones etc) whereas those used mainly or exclusively by visitors (e.g. art studios, places to eat and drink) are high in number.'

The majority of candidates were able to demonstrate similar qualative and quantative skills in section 1(c). However, the term 'valid' in 1c(iv) was poorly understood and relatively few candidates obtained marks for this section. The following excellent answer was written by a candidate considered the limitations of the resource material:-
' They are not very valid, because the questionnaire was completed by a mere ten residents – that is, presumably, far from an adequate representation of the town's population'

As with previous examination series, Question 2 resulted in a wider spread of marks than Question 1. The first section 2 (a) proved to be very accessible, but a number of candidates were unaware of how to complete or label a cross section, and centres would be well advised to ensure that candidates become more familiar with these essential skills.   A number of candidates wrote detailed descriptions of the trends shown by the completed graph (Figure 2(e), with the best answers giving the overall pattern, supported by relevant figures, and noting any variations in addition to commenting on the relationship between the depth and width of the river.

Question 3

This question was designed to enable candidates to demonstrate the skills and knowledge obtained when carrying out their own field work investigations. It was again very pleasing to see that most centres had ensured that the work was geographically relevant. As in the previous series, some centres and candidates would benefit from more focused investigations that ensure all the stages of a field work investigation are addressed. Centres are again referred to suggestions in the Teacher's Guide.

In section (a), most candidates were able to state the purpose of their fieldwork, and to give an outline of the work carried out prior to data collection in (b). Better prepared answers included a clear sequence of the work carried out:-
' Before collecting fieldwork information a pilot survey was carried out to determine whether the area would be suitable to collect data in.' The candidate then described and justified the stages of the investigation the equipment that they planned to use as well as some of the safety aspects that they had considered.

Section (c) enabled candidates to describe the ways in which they had actually collected the data, and to explain why these methods had been selected. A small number of candidates misinterpreted the question described methods of data recording such as using tally sheets or computers. Despite this, the majority of responses identified problems that occurred during data collection in section (d).

There were a number of valid suggestions in response to (e), how the data collection might have been extended. Candidates found it much harder to suggest why extended data collection might improve their investigation, and most limited themselves to simple ideas such as having more results. Candidates should be encouraged to consider the importance to the validity of their conclusions of improved and modified data collection.

The coursework option attracted an entry of an entry of approximately one third of the total candidates for this session. There were entries from candidates from both the higher and foundation tiers.

Administration

There were no administrative errors on behalf of the centre and centres are to be thanked for contributing to the moderation process.
The majority of work was submitted in simple light weight folders which again assisted with moderation. It would be helpful if centres would ensure that coursework pages are fastened together.
Much of the submitted work was accurately marked. However, there were instances of centres being overgenerous or inconsistent with some criteria, and this caused some adjustment in the candidates' marks.

Candidates' performance

General

The choices of topic were all geographically relevant. Teachers had made great efforts to ensure that their candidates had access to appropriate areas for data collection, and there were some pleasing examples of candidates being encouraged to select topics which they found especially interesting.

Criterion 1 – Introduction and aims

It is essential that candidates have a clear aim for their study; in addition, candidates should be able to develop questions or hypothesis. A number of carefully designed studies did not include an outline of the proposed data collection, thus limiting attainment for this criterion. It was pleasing to note that the studies were generally well located and there a number of excellent, detailed hand drawn location maps.

Criterion 2 – Data collection

The majority that submitted work had a strong emphasis on primary data collection, and the majority of candidates had used a good variety of methods to collect their information. All the work contained clear descriptions of the methods used to collect information, and the majority of studies included some explanation of the methods used to collect and record the data. However, the data collection methods were only justified by a few candidates and consequently a number of pieces of work failed to reach Level 3.

Criterion 3- Data presentation

Candidates demonstrated some excellent data presentation techniques. These included digital photographs, field sketches, cross sections and well constructed maps, the majority of which included titles and locations. Candidates should be encouraged to annotate photographs and to use cross references to incorporate their data into the text. Some candidates used the wide variety of techniques required to access Level 3, but a considerable majority limited the data presentation to basic conventional methods such as pie charts and bar graphs, and therefore limited the marks awarded for this criterion.

Candidates should be encouraged to extend their range of presentation, perhaps including located graphs and annotated photographs on base maps. There were several incidences where the use of flow diagrams would have enhanced the studies.

Very few candidates attempted to justify their selected methods; this could be rectified by the use of a simple table outlining the method of presentation with a brief justification.

Criterion 4 – Analysis and Conclusions.

The majority of candidates were able to comment on their data to some extent. Frequently, however, this was limited by a lack of quantative discussion and did not reach the higher levels for this criterion.

Most candidates were able to offer some concluding comments, with the candidates who were able to reach Level 3 returning to their original hypothesis or question.

Candidates were able to comment on the limitations of their studies and to make valid suggestions for improvement. Most candidates tended to limit these to repeating their data collection or taking a larger number of measurements, with only a few evaluations recognising that changes at the planning, data collection and analytical stages would improve the validity of the study.

Criterion 5 – Planning and Organisation

The majority of work was well organised in a logical manner, and all candidates attained at least Level 2. The best studies included diagrams and graphs that were integrated into the text, and made appropriate cross – references throughout the work.

All candidates acknowledged sources of secondary data, including maps, books and websites. It was also pleasing to se the use of ICT to enhance a number of the studies.

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