

Principal Examiner Feedback November 2009

GCSE

iGCSE Geography (4370) Paper 1F

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Unit 4370 Paper 1F

General comments

There was a small entry but a significant range of marks with similar numbers of candidates attaining each of the six graded standards of response to this paper. Good use was generally made of the resource material provided and far fewer scripts than has become usual contained unanswered parts. There was pleasing evidence of geographical skills and of conceptual understanding but as before knowledge and its application was a key differentiator of performance.

Question-specific Comments

Section A

Question 1: Water

The Water question generally scores well and this was again the case with most candidates being broadly familiar with discharge, river regimes and hydrographs. Parts (a)(i)-(ii) based on the resource material generated solid responses, and the two terms tested by parts (a)(iii) and (v) were generally known. The non-climatic factors influencing river regimes were only known by the more able candidates as was the nature of upland rivers and their landforms. Very few candidates reached Level 2 marks in part (b).

Question 2: Hazards

This question was rarely more than a modest scorer largely because maximum mark responses to any part were rare. In part (a)(ii) offering three distinctive reasons proved to be a challenge because the obvious points about lowlying and the storm surge were often not made. Too frequently scripts merely “lifted” their answers from the resource material for (a)(iii). Equally, full answers with obvious points were generally absent in (a)(iv), and not all scripts offered distinctive aid types in (a)(v). Part (b) was generally well answered for a closing item though many answers were generic and confused earthquake-mitigation measures with those more relevant to storm-proofing.

Question 3: Production

A reasonably well answered question with most candidates gaining all or most marks in parts (a)(i)-(iii). Part (a)(iv) posed greater problems for the candidates with most not sticking to an explanation based on one named input only. Loose references to a range of inputs were typical. Part (b) was generally better done with the vast majority being able to score at least the first mark of each side of the argument. Pleasingly, informal employment was broadly known and understood by the candidates. Many reached at least the top of Level 1 by identifying valid characteristics.

Question 4: Development

The Development question was no longer the weak response on this paper. It was encouraging to note that question 4 scored at least as well as others on the paper though few started well with most responses to (a)(i) concentrating on characteristics other than location. Most used the data fairly well to identify the source and impact of the new wealth in parts (a)(ii) and (iii) though defining GNP ((a)(ii)) and arguing the case for diversification ((a)(v)) proved to be rather more problematic for the candidates. Most candidates coped reasonably well with the demands of part (b) by being able to write about improving living standards, services and infrastructure.

Question 5: Migration

This is an invariably well understood topic and well answered question. There was no exception to the general rule in this examination with most candidates achieving one of their higher marks on the paper. The concept of a migration balance was generally well understood as was illustrated by the responses to (a)(ii), and the majority of candidates were able to offer the idea of job availability for immigrants in a period of economic growth in their answers to (a)(iii). The push and pull model was familiar to most candidates but some had difficulty in either relating valid factors to the required context or confused push with pull and vice-versa.

Question 6 : Urban Environments

A satisfactorily answered question. Parts (a)(i)-(iii) posed few difficulties for the candidates but few got beyond an initial mark in their answers to (a)(iv). Few identified the general picture and interpreted the numbers by writing about the rapid and enormous increase. (b)(i) proved to be a good differentiator with only more able candidates going beyond the 1 mark for industrialisation type of answer. (b)(ii) tended to be better answered than (b)(i) with many candidates being able to at least identify two relevant urban problems.

Section B

Question 7: Fragile Environments

The vast majority of candidates chose this question in this optional section of the paper. It would seem that deforestation had been both well taught and learned by the candidates. Part (a) provided a positive starter for most though (a)(iv) did generate some unexpected and often unsuitable answers. The environmental impacts of deforestation were generally well known and candidates often scored respectably in (b). Specific identified strategies for sustainable forest management were rarely evident in (c) though (d) with its request for the causes of deforestation was much better done. Most candidates were able to offer a number of specific reasons for forest clearance.

Question 8: Globalisation

There were very few answers to this question and those making the option tended not to score well. Parts (a)(iii), (a)(iv) and (c) often yielded very low scores. A second or third distinctive characteristic of a TNC ((a)(iii)) and any reasoning beyond cheap labour in (a)(iv) was rare. The majority of scripts made no reference to aviation, communications technology, the United Nations ... in part (c), preferring instead to again write about TNCs only. Part (b) was reasonably well answered with most candidates being able to outline an advantage and a disadvantage to an LEDC of hosting a TNC.

Question 9: Human Welfare

Again, there were few takers for this option. However, those that did tended to score relatively well apart from in part (c). There was pleasing understanding of the data so that the opening question parts frequently scored well. Most candidates also seemed very familiar with the idea of life expectancy and its determinants so that marks were generally picked up throughout part (a). Parts (b) and (c) were generally less well done. The second question in particular, in (b) was frequently ignored by candidates. A typical response to (c) was to describe and give examples of international aid and who gives it rather than to explore the link as was requested between aid and human welfare. Low finale marks were typical.

IGCSE Geography 4370 Statistics

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grading option 1: 03 Written Alternative
1F Written Paper

Grade	Max. Mark	C	D	E	F	G
Overall Subject Grade Boundaries	100	52	45	38	31	24

Grading Option 2: 04 Coursework
1F Written Paper

Grade	Max. Mark	C	D	E	F	G
Overall Subject Grade Boundaries	100	51	44	37	30	23

Grading Option 3: 03 Written Alternative
2H Written Paper

Grade	Max. Mark	*	A	B	C	D	E
Overall Subject Grade Boundaries	100	70	62	54	46	38	34

Grading Option 4: 04 Coursework
2H Written Paper

Grade	Max. Mark	*	A	B	C	D	E
Overall Subject Grade Boundaries	100	69	61	53	45	37	33

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