AQA

ASSESSMENT and
QUALIFICATIONS
ALLIANCE

General Certificate of Secondary Education

Geography 4035
Specification B

**Unit 1   Managing Places in the 21st
                 Century**

Report on the Examination
2010 examination - January series

Unit 1 – Managing Places in the 21st Century

Introduction

This was the first unit to be examined in the specification. Candidates had to answer one question on either the Coastal Environment or the Urban Environment. A number of candidates attempted both questions. The coastal environment option was the more popular choice with a take up of approximately 60%.

General Points

- Very few candidates failed to complete the paper, suggesting that the timing of the paper was appropriate.
- Feedback suggested that centres had found the examination a sound reflection of the specification and a good test of the knowledge and understanding embodied within the specification.
- It was evident that the majority of centres had prepared their candidates effectively. Teachers are to be congratulated on their efforts towards ensuring that candidates had a sound grasp of the concepts that underpin the course.
- The use of resources was generally good. A significant proportion of candidates used clearly and appropriately quoted evidence from resources in their answers. However, the use of the Ordnance Survey map extract in Question 1 was variable. It was evident that a number of candidates did not really understand the demands of map reading skills and interpretation. Consequently, what might be considered fairly easy marks were lost.
- The use of examples was variable. In many cases candidates brought in well developed, appropriate case studies while in others the instruction to include 'examples' or 'own knowledge' was largely ignored.
- The majority of candidates responded to the question commands effectively.
- The use of the mark allocations and writing spaces was generally good, the majority of candidates taking the opportunity of using the 'extra space'. A small number of candidates used a 'listing' approach to some of the longer questions. This was often self-limiting and should be discouraged.
- It was encouraging to see the use of annotated diagrams to explain physical processes and the developmental sequence of landforms. When done well, this was a very effective way of showing knowledge and understanding.
- It was evident that a small number of candidates were not properly equipped. The lack of a ruler can affect levels of accuracy when completing graphs or measuring distances. At this level, basic skills demand a high level of accuracy.

Focus for development

- **Addressing commands** – make sure that candidates are aware of the question commands and understand what they mean. The most common misunderstanding is between 'describe' and 'explain' commands. Responding to a 'describe' command by offering detailed explanations simply takes up time, while using description in response to an 'explain' command will restrict the possible marks for the question.

- **Addressing the full instructions** – question instructions which ask for 'examples', 'own knowledge', 'using Figure …', 'using Figure … and your own knowledge' are making clear points that there are marks available for those candidates who address these instructions.

- **Use the resource effectively** – questions will often ask for use of a resource or use of a resource and own knowledge. Using a resource does not simply mean copying parts of it.

To achieve higher marks it is about selecting appropriate evidence from the resource and bringing in linked ideas that have been studied. Practice for the examination by using a range of resources, especially visual resources. Simple exercises identifying and annotating key evidence from resources can help to develop understanding and interpretation skills.

- **Rehearse basic skills** – Stress the need for high levels of accuracy when dealing with skill based questions**.** Simple errors can lose marks and can make a difference of a whole grade.

- **Identify and define key words** – There are a number of key words which are fundamental to the specification. Make sure that students understand these words and are comfortable with them. Examples include: economic, environmental, environmental pressures, issues/conflicts, sustainability. The use of geographical terminology is often part of the trigger for higher level responses.

- **Selecting examples** – Look for locational examples which cover a number of aspects of the specification unit, especially when building up revision sheets.

- **Use precise revision** – Break the specification down into smaller key components and build up a revision sheet on each component.

- **Look for different types of revision** – Adopt a 'fit for purpose' rather than a 'one size fits all' revision strategy. For example, the use of annotated sketches to revise physical processes and landforms or photographs to revise elements of the course that have strong visual possibilities (pressures in urban areas).

- **Examination Training** – Train students into adopting good practice in examinations. For example: identifying commands, marking up resources, checking all short answers at the end of the examination (they will invariable find an error or something they can add).

Foundation Tier (40351F)

Question 1 – The Coastal Environment

1(a)(i), (ii), (iii)
These questions presented few problems. The majority of candidates used Figure 1 effectively to identify the correct responses.

1(a)(iv)
The majority of candidates showed some understanding of 'multi-use' and were able to identify a range of exemplars from Figure 1 to support their answers. A significant proportion went on to develop the idea further by bringing in a wider range of uses or extending the points identified in the resource. A small number of candidates focused on different aspects of one type of use (usually tourism). This was somewhat self-limiting.

1(a)(v)
The majority of candidates completed the graph with a high degree of accuracy and consequently scored full marks. However, a small number lost marks because of a lack of care in plotting the points.

1(b)
Those candidates who clearly understood the word 'environment' and responded effectively to the demands of the question generally did well. A number of candidates made no reference at all to Figure 3 or simply used generic terms such as 'pollution' or 'damage' with no development or explanation. Using unqualified terms in questions about environmental pressures tend to limit the marks and consequently should be avoided.

(1)(c)(i), (ii)
The majority of candidates either knew the correct answers or were able to use their general understanding of the topic to work them out.

1(d)(i)
The level of knowledge shown in response to this question was impressive and the majority of candidates scored three or four marks. Where three marks were scored it was usually the wave cut platform that was incorrect.

1(d)(ii)
It was evident that most candidates had a good understanding about the sequence of headland erosion. A significant proportion used technical language with considerable accuracy to describe both process and sequence.

1(e)
The majority of candidates either knew the correct answers or were able to use their general understanding of the topic to work them out.

1(f)(i), (ii), (iii), (iv)
These questions tested map reading skills and interpretation but were clearly based on the study of coastal environments. Responses were variable. It was encouraging that the knowledge based elements (i) and (ii) were answered well, with candidates showing a sound understanding of depositional processes and features. However, the skills based elements appeared to pose problems for a number of candidates, with many making simple, fundamental errors. This may reflect a lack of practice through the revision period or a lack of the use of Ordnance Survey maps during the teaching of the unit. Clearly, a study about coastal uses,

processes and features lends itself to the use of OS map extracts and it is helpful if students are confident in their use of basic skills.

1(f)(v)
Most candidates showed a good general awareness of the idea expressed in the question and were able to identify how the area on the map extract might be used for leisure activities. A number simply listed features with no real development or explanation. This tended to restrict the level of response. A small number of candidates appeared not to have used the map at all, simply listing general leisure activities such as golf or using generic ideas such as 'theme parks' or 'leisure parks'.

1(f)(vi)
Most candidates showed a good general awareness of the idea expressed in the question and were able to state how leisure activities could damage the environment. Responses that simply used unqualified words such as 'pollution' or 'litter' failed to fully address the question which required an appreciation of how activities actually damage the environment.

1(g)
Many candidates showed an impressive level of understanding of coastal management. It was pleasing to see a lot of evidence of learned knowledge with the majority of candidates able to name and describe a range of coastal management methods. There was a high level of technical understanding about particular engineering methods. Those candidates who were able to both describe and explain how the methods reduced the risk of erosion or flooding generally produced excellent answers.

Question 2 – The Urban Environment

2(a)(i)
The majority of candidates completed the graph with a high degree of accuracy and consequently scored full marks. However, a small number lost marks because of a lack of care and it was evident that candidates did not have a ruler.

2(a)(ii), (iii)
These questions presented few problems. The majority of candidates used Figure 7 effectively to identify the correct responses.

2(a)(iv)
A number of candidates appeared confused by the question and responded as if it were asking about population rather than 'urban' population. Those that did pick up the idea about urban change were generally able to address the question effectively.

2(b)(i)
The great majority of candidates that attempted this question scored full marks.

2(b)(ii)
This question presented few problems and virtually all candidates used Figure 8 effectively to reach the correct answer.

2(b)(iii)
This question was not answered well and it was evident that the majority of candidates did not have a clear understanding of what the term 'urbanisation' actually means. Many simply defined it as 'growing cities' rather than a proportionate change.

2(b)(iv)
The majority of candidates showed a good understanding of the question and were able to offer a range of possible reasons why people might move to urban areas. The traditional 'push' and 'pull' idea was used by many candidates and when backed up by specific examples generally produced thoughtful answers. A small number of candidates used specific locational examples to identify factors of migration, often using detailed knowledge.

2(b)(v)
Most candidates were able to use Figure 9 effectively to identify the problems found in developing cities. However, the key to this question was an appreciation of the 'challenges of urban growth' or an understanding of why particular factors are problems. This idea proved problematic for many candidates who did not always get beyond the basic description of problems, often simply copied from Figure 9. Those candidates who developed the themes expressed in Figure 9 often produced impressive responses. Some of the ideas considered were: the challenges of housing the urban poor, the challenge of supplying basic services; the challenge of managing increasing volumes of traffic and the challenge of managing health issues related to pollution and waste. This was quite a sophisticated idea and it was encouraging to see a number of candidates responding to it with thoughtful and well documented answers.

2(b)(vi)
It was evident that most candidates had a good understanding of the question and were able to consider what is required to improve living conditions in less developed cities. In general terms there were two types of response. Firstly, those candidates who simply identified a number of fairly generic ideas (better housing, clean water etc) without using any detailed information or place reference. The second approach used either place detail or specific improvement projects (or both) such as self-help schemes and water aid projects. This approach often generated well developed and thoughtful responses which were able to achieve the highest marks.

2(c)
This question presented few problems. The majority of candidates were able to identify the correct responses.

2(d)(i)
Candidates used Figure 11 effectively to identify changes linked to the urban improvement scheme. Most candidates identified four clear differences to achieve full marks.

2(d)(ii)
The majority of candidates scored at least two marks on this question simply by mentioning job opportunities created by the supermarket and the nursery. A number developed this idea further by expressing different types of jobs or the fact that the nursery might give people the opportunity to work while their children were being looked after. This type of development allowed candidates to achieve full marks.

2(e)(i), (ii)
These questions presented few problems. The majority of candidates were able to score full marks on these questions.

2(e)(iii)
The quality of responses to this question was often very good and it was evident that the majority of candidates had looked at the resource carefully. Candidates showed a detailed

appreciation of the way in which transport initiatives would reduce car use. A number then went on to explain how the local provision of both jobs and services would reduce the need for people to travel outside of the area.

2(e)(iv)
It was very encouraging to see that the majority of candidates identified such things as renewable energy and eco-friendly house building techniques as elements of sustainable urban planning. Identifying these factors from Figure 12 showed a useful awareness of the question but did not always address the idea of 'sustainable urban planning' which is clearly about more than one or two elements of eco development. Those candidates who took a broader approach, considering issues of work, local services, transport and resource management generally scored full marks.

Higher Tier (40351H)

Question 1 – The Coastal Environment

1(a)(i), (ii), (iii)
These questions presented few problems. The majority of candidates used Figure 1 effectively to identify the correct responses.

1(a)(iv)
The majority of candidates showed some understanding of 'multi-use' and were able to identify a range of exemplars from Figure 1 to support their answers. A significant proportion went on to develop the idea further by bringing in a wider range of uses or extending the points identified in the resource. A small number of candidates focused on different aspects of one type of use (usually tourism). This was somewhat self-limiting.

1(b)
Responses to this question were variable. A number of candidates simply used unqualified terms such as 'pollution' or 'damage' without offering any understanding about cause and effect. This limited responses to the lowest level. Those candidates who identified a clear chain of cause and effect were able to use specific examples with detailed knowledge produced excellent responses. The key idea of 'putting pressure on an environment' was clearly not understood by a small number of candidates.

1(c)(i), (ii)
Candidates generally showed a good understanding of 'weathering' and 'erosion'. The majority were able to define the terms effectively and in most cases give accurate examples of each.

1(c)(iii)
This question produced some excellent answers. Candidates clearly understood the nature of coastal erosion and were able to describe both marine erosion and cliff top weathering. The majority of candidates used geographical terminology with accuracy and fully appreciated the sequence of events that led to the formation of the landforms shown in Figure 3.

1(d)(i)
The use of map evidence was generally sound and the majority of candidates were able to achieve full marks by offering a detailed description of the spit shown on the Ordnance Survey map. A small number of candidates failed to address the command 'describe' and began to offer explanations. This tended to limit the marks for this question and cause a certain amount of confusion about question 1(d)(ii).

1(d)(ii)
Many candidates used annotated diagrams to help them answer this question, often to great effect. It was clear that the majority of candidates had a sound understanding of longshore drift and how it relates to the formation of spits. There was some confusion about the actual reasons for deposition and the curved shape of many spits.

1(e)(i)
Most candidates showed a good general awareness of the idea expressed in the question and were able to identify how the area on the map extract might be used for leisure activities. A number simply listed features with no real development or explanation. This tended to restrict the level of response. A small number of candidates appeared not to have used the map at all, simply listing general leisure activities such as golf or using generic ideas such as 'theme parks' or 'leisure parks'.

1(e)(ii)
It was evident that most candidates clearly understood the term 'conservation' and were able to use this understanding to produce very effective answers to this question. The use of map evidence was clearly sound.

1(f)
Many candidates showed an impressive level of understanding of coastal management. It was pleasing to see a lot of evidence of learned knowledge with the majority of candidates able to name and describe a range of coastal management methods. There was a high level of technical understanding about particular engineering methods. Those candidates who were able to both describe and explain how the methods reduced the risk of erosion or flooding generally produced excellent answers.

Question 2 – The Urban Environment

2(a)(i)
Candidates that identified the 'rate of change' as the key idea rather than the actual figure generally did well. Simply repeating the data with no real comparative observations was not creditworthy.

2(a)(ii)
There were two main approaches to this question, both of which produced thoughtful responses. The majority of candidates considered that there is an estimated urban growth in North America and suggested reasons for this. The second approach considered the view that urban growth is estimated to be relatively low because North America already has a high percentage of people living in urban areas.

2(b)(i)
The great majority of candidates that attempted this question scored full marks.

2(b)(ii)
The majority of candidates showed a good understanding of the question and were able to offer a range of possible reasons why people might move to urban areas. The traditional 'push' and 'pull' idea was used by many candidates and when backed up by specific examples generally produced thoughtful answers. A small number of candidates used specific locational examples to identify factors of migration, often using detailed knowledge.

2(b)(iii)
The majority of candidates used Figure 7 effectively to identify problems created by urban growth in less developed countries. While this was worthy of some credit it failed to fully address the question which was about challenges. Those candidates who picked up this idea often produced thoughtful observations which clearly went beyond the listing of problems. For example, 'providing housing for the urban poor in rapidly growing cities', 'managing environmental issues such as industrial pollution and human waste' or 'managing the growing problem of traffic congestion'.

2(b)(iv)
This question produced a wide range of thoughtful responses with answers often showing a considerable depth of understanding and locational knowledge. The key benefits often considered were based around the ideas of a 'cheap pool of labour' and 'providing a growing market for business'. A small number of candidates based their response on a detailed analysis

of Dharvai, the urban slum in Mumbai. In many of these responses the depth of factual knowledge was very impressive.

2(b)(v)
It was evident that most candidates had a good understanding of the question and were able to consider what is required to improve living conditions in less developed cities. In general terms there were two types of response. Firstly, those candidates who simply identified a number of fairly generic ideas (better housing, clean water etc) without using any detailed information or place reference. The second approach used either place detail or specific improvement projects (or both) such as self-help schemes and water aid projects. This approach often generated well developed and thoughtful responses which were able to achieve the highest marks.

2(c)
The majority of candidates used Figure 8 effectively to identify the reasons why the survey area might be considered a disadvantaged area. Responses varied between simply restating the data in a comparative way to using the data to make analytical observations. This approach generally scored full marks.

2(d)(i), (ii)
These questions presented few problems. The majority of candidates used Figure 9 effectively and were able to achieve full marks.

2(e)(i)
 The quality of responses to this question was often very good and it was evident that the majority of candidates had looked at the resource carefully. Candidates showed a detailed appreciation of the way in which transport initiatives would reduce car use. A number then went on to explain how the local provision of both jobs and services would reduce the need for people to travel outside of the area.

2(e)(ii)
This question presented few problems and the majority of candidates were able to score full marks.

2(e)(iii)
Few candidates fully understand the term 'carbon neutral', many suggesting that it meant 'produces no carbon'. This was a clear example of the importance of learning key definitions.

2(f)
It was encouraging to see that the majority of candidates had an understanding of how specific management strategies reduce the pressure on environments. In this context, many went on to write about renewable energy and eco friendly house building techniques. While this approach showed an awareness of the question, it did not always fully develop the idea of sustainability. A number of candidates brought in examples, often with a considerable amount of detail being used to express the idea of eco-friendly communities. It was clear that a significant number of candidates understood or appreciated the elements required to make a community sustainable without being able to fully explain the concept of sustainability.