External Assessment Report 2009

Subject	Geography
Level	Standard Grade

The statistics used in this report are pre-appeal.

This report provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers/lecturers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding. It would be helpful to read this report in conjunction with the published question papers and marking instructions for the Examination.

Comments on candidate performance

General comments

Performance of candidates at Credit level was highly commendable**.** At General level performance was however more disappointing, perhaps due to the number of candidates who achieved the higher award at grade 2. Foundation candidates performed very well. At both Credit and General level performance in Knowledge and Understanding was poorer than that in Enquiry Skills. Performance in both elements at Foundation level was consistently good.

At General level the markers noted a significant difference in performance between those candidates presented at General/Credit and Foundation/General levels. General level, as with Credit, demands a fairly high standard of writing skills; candidates in most questions are required to provide extended written answers. Unfortunately many Foundation/General candidates do not do this.

Candidates responded well to the Foundation paper which includes a number of questions which ask them to choose from a list of given options rather than provide written answers.

At all levels markers noted the continued improvement in answers to the Ordnance Survey questions and more significantly Enquiry Skills questions on gathering and processing techniques. This reflects the high standard of preparation of candidates in these areas in most centres.

Areas in which candidates performed well

At Credit level candidates performed well in the following questions:
Questions 1ai and 1aii (identifying physical features on the OS map and explaining how one of the features was formed) ; Question 3 (explaining changes in weather on synoptic chart) ; Question 4 (benefits of power line) ; Question 6 (changes in farming).

At General level candidates performed well in :
Question 1a (physical features of river and valley) ; Question 1c (map evidence to show CBD) ; Question 2 (explaining the formation of a waterfall or ox bow lake) ; Question 4b (description of climate from climate graph) ; Question 9a (changes in population structure of Hungary).
Note that most of these performances were made by General/ Credit candidates rather than Foundation/ General candidates.

At Foundation level candidates performed well in:
Questions 1c, 1d, 1g, 1h, 2, 3b, 4a, 4b, 6, 8b, 10a and 13b.
Almost all of these questions were of a multiple choice/tick box nature.

Areas which candidates found demanding

At Credit level these included:
Question 1b (comparison of settlement functions) ; Question 2 (explain formation of a V shaped valley – many candidates explained the formation of a U shaped valley referring to glacial processes) ; Question 7 (location of a science park – many candidates did not understand the term science park and confused this with the site of the university and answered accordingly).

At General level these included:
Most General/Credit candidates achieved at least half marks in the General questions.
Foundation/General candidates found the following questions demanding:
Question 1b (country park); Question 1f (site of football stadium) ; Question 2 (waterfall/ox bow lake) ;Question 6b (gathering techniques) ; Question 8 (European Union – most candidates simply lifted statements from the diagram) ; Question 9b (problems created by changing population structure.
Many candidates at this level missed out answers to a number of questions.

At Foundation level these included:
The vast majority of candidates were able to attempt all of the questions and gained at least half marks in most questions, but were weakest in questions requiring written answers.

Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

Most centres appear to have heeded the advice in previous PA reports namely, having candidates reading the rubric of the question properly and being prepared to explain or describe appropriately, avoiding listing and lifting statements without giving additional comment, giving good examples in their answers, especially in answers to Ordnance Survey map questions. Candidates appear to be coping better with gathering/processing techniques questions by avoiding rote type answers and repeating explanations to the choice of techniques. Hopefully this will continue.

Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2008	18506

Number of resulted entries in 2009	17746

Statistical Information: Performance of candidates

Distribution of overall awards

Grade 1	23.2%
Grade 2	24.3%
Grade 3	21.9%
Grade 4	11.5%
Grade 5	11.2%
Grade 6	6.1%
Grade 7	1.8%
No award	0.1%

Grade boundaries for each assessable element in the subject included in the report

Assessable Element	Credit Max Mark	Grade Boundaries		General Max Mark	Grade Boundaries		Foundation Max Mark	Grade Boundaries	
		1	2		3	4		5	6
KU	**32**	21	13	**28**	15	10	**24**	17	12
ES	**48**	34	24	**42**	22	17	**36**	24	17