Candidates' Performance

Paper 1 Section A

There were 40 multiple-choice questions in this paper. The average number of questions answered correctly by candidates was 26. The overall performance of the candidates was satisfactory.

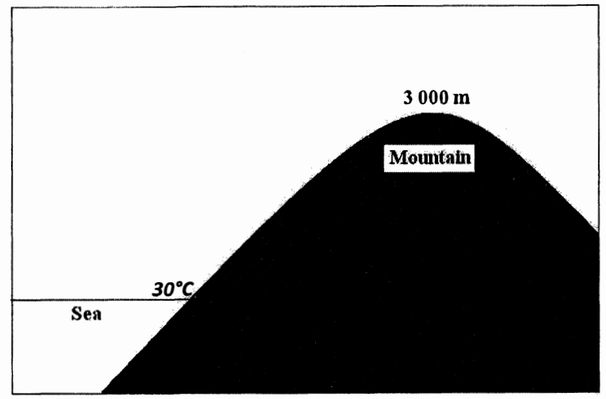
In Item 3, some candidates included the parks and sports ground around Kingswood Villa when calculating the area of Tin Shui Wai Park, and hence wrongly chose Option C as the answer.

Q.3 The area of Tin Shui Wai Park in grid square 9186 is approximately

A.	0.04 km^2.	(5%)
*B.	0.19 km^2.	(39%)
C.	0.34 km^2.	(42%)
D.	0.49 km^2.	(14%)

In Item 39, only about a third of the candidates were able to choose the key. This indicates that some candidates might have missed the concept that more heat is lost in long wave radiation at the summit due to less heat absorbers, such as water vapour, in the higher altitude.

Q.39 Refer to the figure below which shows the temperature at sea-level is 30°C.



Which of the following statements is/ are correct?

(1) The temperature at 3 000 m is approximately 12°C.
(2) More heat is lost in long wave radiation at the summit.
(3) The summit is covered by ice.

A.	(1) only	(47%)
B.	(3) only	(8%)
*C.	(1) and (2) only	(36%)
D.	(2) and (3) only	(9%)

Paper 1 Section B

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
1. (a) (i)	23	Satisfactory. Most candidates were able to give the correct answer. Some candidates, however, wrongly identified the landform as a coastal depositional feature (e.g. beach) or a type of vegetation (e.g. mangrove).
(ii)		Fair. Many candidates were able to describe and explain correctly the favourable conditions for the formation of a delta. Some candidates, however, misinterpreted the delta as a coastal depositional landform and gave incorrect answers.
(iii)		Fair. Some candidates were not able to compare the characteristics of the upper and lower courses of a river with map evidence.
(b) (i)		Well-answered. Most candidates were able to explain the favourable factors for cultivation with correct map evidence. Some candidates, however, mixed up the map evidence of flat land with lowland.
(ii)		Poor. Most candidates were only able to list simply the different kinds of pollution problems caused by the landfill. Some candidates gave the incorrect explanation that water pollution was caused by rubbish being washed into the river and coastal area. Few of them mentioned the modification of fluvial and coastal landform.
2. (a) (i)	55	Satisfactory. Most candidates were able to identify the rift valley while the rest came up with incorrect answers like volcanic island arc, mid-oceanic ridge, ocean trench and fold mountain, etc.
(ii)		Fair. Only some candidates were able to explain the formation of the rift valley with a series of annotated diagrams. A few candidates separated the annotations from the diagrams. Some candidates drew one annotated diagram only.
(iii)		Good. Many candidates were able to explain why volcanoes were found in the area. However, some candidates were not able to distinguish magma from lava, as well as intrusive from extrusive igneous activities.
(b) (i)		Good. Most candidates were able to describe the opportunities and risks brought by the volcano. A few candidates just copied the information from the figure and scored no marks.
(ii)		Fair. Many candidates had little understanding on lava diversion channel. Some candidates were not able to read the question carefully. They were only able to give general answers on the feasibility of the measure rather than evaluating its effectiveness.

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
3. (a)	64	Fair. Many candidates were not able to apply geographical concepts, such as multi-point production, more developed countries and less developed countries, in their answers. Some candidates were not able to mention the nature of the product. Some candidates were not able to refer to the figure and gave their answers simply by recalling textbook contents.
(b)		Good. Most candidates were able to explain the shift of the production lines.
(c) (i)		Fair. Many candidates were not able to list both the positive and negative socio-economic impact of the proposal on Guangdong. Some candidates simply copied the information from the figure without explanation.
(ii)		Fair. Most candidates were only able to mention the increase in job opportunities and rising GDP in the US.
(iii)		Poor. Many candidates mixed up the answers in parts (c) (ii) and (c) (iii). They were not able to evaluate the feasibility of the proposal.
4. (a) (i)	57	Good. Most candidates calculated the percentage change correctly.
(ii)		Satisfactory. Many candidates were able to explain how various human activities had changed the forest area with reference to the data provided. However, some candidates gave their answers simply by recalling textbook contents.
(b) (i)		Fair. Many candidates had limited understanding of the nutrient cycle. They just described the operation of the nutrient cycle without explaining how it would be altered by human activities.
(ii)		Fair. A large number of candidates mixed up the answers in parts (b) (i) and (b) (ii). They even gave irrelevant answers, such as global warming and the impact on the native tribes.
(c)		Poor. Many candidates did not understand the meaning of 'rainforest adoption' and therefore were not able to give an appropriate evaluation on the measure. Some candidates even mentioned developers might buy rainforest land for development.

Paper 1 Section C

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
5	11	Poor. Most candidates were not able to distinguish land use conflicts from other conflicts. Many candidates only explained how suburbanisation had led to land use changes and were not able to link the process of suburbanisation with land use conflicts. In the second part of the question, not many candidates were able to respond precisely to the balance between environmental conservation and urban development for a comprehensive evaluation. Their evaluations were often biased on either side. The concept of new town held by many candidates was superficial and even incorrect. Quite a number of candidates wrongly quoted Kwun Tong as a new town and discussed its inner city problems. A few candidates even mistook new town development as urban renewal.
6	49	Fair. Many candidates overlooked the term 'climatic constraints' in the question and described all the farming constraints in Southern California. Although quite a number of candidates were able to give a general description on the climatic constraints, especially those related to precipitation characteristics, of farming in Southern California, their knowledge on the climatic constraints related to temperature characteristics in the area was rather limited. Not many candidates were able to provide data to support their description on the spatial and temporal patterns of climatic constraints in Southern California. Very few candidates were able to describe the constraints of frost on farming while many of them misinterpreted soil salinization as a climatic constraint. Many candidates misinterpreted the second part of the question by focusing their evaluation on the adverse impact of irrigation. Only a limited number of candidates were able to evaluate the effectiveness of irrigation with reference to various climatic constraints. Very few candidates mentioned other methods to tackle the climatic constraint in Southern California.
7	40	Fair. Almost all candidates were able to provide ample examples of fossil fuels and human activities that produced greenhouse gases. Only a limited number of candidates were able to explain the mechanism leading to global warming in detail. Some candidates gave their answers simply by recalling textbook contents without referring to the question. Some candidates mistook the ability of greenhouse gases to absorb the short wave radiation from insolation and wrongly quoted carbon monoxide and oxygen as examples of greenhouse gases. While many candidates were able to evaluate the effectiveness of different types of renewable energy resources to combat the adverse impact of global temperature change in the second part of the question, quite a number of them mistook nuclear energy as an example. Quite a number of candidates were able to explain the unsuccessful application of renewable energy resources (e.g. huge cost, effect of geographical location, etc.), but they were not able to suggest other measures which might be more effective in combating global warming.

General comments and recommendations

1. Candidates should pay attention to the key words, especially the geographical terms, provided in the questions and study carefully the information given to avoid misinterpretation.

2. Candidates should apply geographical concepts and perspectives in answering the questions.

3. Candidates should master various geographical skills, including map reading, photograph and graph interpretation.

4. Candidates should master the skills of drawing annotated diagrams, especially the correct placing of annotations.

5. Candidates should be more familiar with current issues and not just rely on textbook knowledge.

Paper 2 Section D

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
1. (a) (i)	28	Very Good. A higher proportion of candidates were able to point out the characteristics of the rock type.
(ii)		Good. Most candidates were able to explain the formation of rock with proper use of geographical terms.
(b)		Poor. Less than half of the candidates were able to present the ideas clearly in annotated diagrams.
(c) (i)		Poor. Most candidates described the 'formation processes' instead of giving the '**physical factors**' leading to the formation of feature Y. Only a few candidates were able to identify the coastal location as shown in Figure 1a.
(ii)		Fair. Most candidates were able to name the weathering processes. However, a higher proportion of candidates misinterpreted 'great diurnal range of temperature' as a factor leading to the formation of feature Y.
2. (a) (i)	31	Fair. Most candidates were able to plot the graphs with data. However, in about one-third of the answer scripts, the starting and ending points of the curves in the graphs were wrongly located.
(ii)		Satisfactory. About half of the candidates were able to describe the annual variations of insolation correctly. However, many candidates were not able to match the position of the overhead sun with correct months in the southern hemisphere.
(iii)		Poor. Candidates should note the different meanings of 'angle of insolation' and 'angle of incidence'. Most candidates were not able to identify the months of summer and winter in the southern hemisphere.
(b)		Poor. Many candidates were not able to point out the position of the overhead sun, thus they were not able to explain how the amount of insolation in July affects the air pressure at the equator.
(c)		Satisfactory. About half of the candidates mentioned about the different heating properties between the land and the sea which shaped the pattern of air pressure along 30°N. Candidates should describe the pattern of air pressure with reference to the location of the continents and oceans.

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
3. (a) (i)	15	Good. Most candidates were able to give the correct data.
(ii)		Satisfactory. About half of the candidates were able to describe the changes. However, they were only able to provide simple explanations. Concepts of logistics, such as 'hauling cost', 'terminal handling charges' and 'overlapping of hinterland', etc. should be applied in this question.
(b) (i)		Fair. Only a small proportion of candidates were able to describe the distribution of river ports with the correct names of places and rivers.
(ii)		Satisfactory. About half of the candidates were able to identify the locational advantages but they should support their answers with relevant map evidence.
(c)		Poor. Most candidates misinterpreted the question. They would have obtained better scores if the concept of logistics was applied in their answers.
4. (a) (i)	26	Good. Most candidates were able to plot the graph correctly. Candidates should use different symbols instead of different colours to indicate the curves in the graph.
(ii)		Satisfactory. Most candidates were able to describe and explain the changes in the area of cultivated land and production of staple crops. However, only a few candidates were able to explain the fluctuation in the production of vegetables.
(b) (i)		Fair. About one-third of the candidates confused the concepts of 'human inputs' and 'labour input'. Only half of the candidates were able to compare the human inputs point by point. Candidates should make the comparison based on the information provided in the photographs in a systematic way.
(ii)		Good. A higher proportion of the candidates were able to explain the advantages of the present farming system.
(iii)		Satisfactory. Most candidates were able to explain why not all farms in the Zhujiang Delta Region adopted the present farming system. However, candidates should apply more geographical concepts in their answers to score higher marks.

Paper 2 Section E

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
5	33	Satisfactory. In explaining how the rock types affect the characteristics of landscapes in Hong Kong, most candidates were able, at least, to point out how igneous rocks affect the landscape characteristics. Good examples were also provided in this part. However, many candidates put too much emphasis on how weathering processes produced the granite landscape. Some candidates confused the concepts of 'igneous rocks' and 'volcanic rocks', as well as 'weathering' and 'erosion'. For the part on sedimentary rocks, some candidates mixed up 'flood plain' and 'sedimentary rocks'. In discussing how the nature of rocks restricts the housing and transport development in Hong Kong, most candidates were not able to relate the nature of rocks to the special technology adopted to overcome the restrictions, as well as the costs induced by building on some types of rocks. Most candidates simply generalised the problem as 'landslides' and gave a wrong interpretation that no building and transport networks should be constructed on these rocks. Only a few candidates were able to point out how the technology, such as landslide mitigation measures, could overcome the restrictions. Some candidates tried to apply the use of underground cavern as sewage treatment plant in Hong Kong, which was irrelevant to this question. In general, the first part of the question was well-attempted while the answer of the second part was too superficial. For improvement in answering questions, candidates should grasp more knowledge from the websites of related government departments.
6	20	Good. As a whole, most candidates were able to compare the climate of southeast and northwest China clearly. Explanation was given systematically with accurate use of geographical terminology. However, candidates should also mention the annual ranges of temperatures when comparing the temperatures of the two regions. They should make the comparison systematically according to the climatic elements of the two regions instead of describing the climatic conditions of the two regions in separate paragraphs. In discussing whether the pressure system is the major controlling factor of rainfall patterns of the two regions, most candidates were able to explain how the monsoon wind systems generated by the different pressure patterns in summer and winter control the rainfall patterns. They were also able to point out how other factors, such as distance from the sea, relief and typhoon in summer, shaped the rainfall patterns. However, a few candidates wrongly applied the planetary wind system in shaping the rainfall pattern in China.

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
7	25	Poor. Candidates should have a more thorough understanding on the concepts of 'traffic problems' and 'traffic management strategies' which were essential in this question. Even though there were various kinds of traffic problems in Hong Kong, many candidates were only able to give a brief and elementary explanation on how the construction of road and railway networks solves the problems. Their answers were superficial and many candidates simply mentioned traffic congestion as the only traffic problem. Candidates should also give examples to demonstrate their understanding of the concept. For evaluation, an overwhelming majority of candidates had little understanding on the concept of 'traffic management strategies'. Candidates should demonstrate why traffic management strategies are better than the construction of road and railway networks in solving various traffic problems. Candidates should also mention the measures adopted in Hong Kong to demonstrate the application of traffic management strategies.
8	22	Satisfactory. Most candidates were able to explain how urban development in the Zhujiang Delta Region affects the river water quality. However, irrelevant answers, such as agricultural waste, were also given. Candidates should give more concrete explanation on how various kinds of pollutants were produced by different kinds of urban activities. For instance, heavy metals and chemicals were mainly produced by industrial activities like dyeing industries and chemical industries; while food processing industries produce organic waste. Candidates should also be aware that the question was related to the quality of river water only and pollution of sea water was irrelevant to this question. A higher proportion of candidates were only able to give some vague and general measures on how legislation helped alleviate the problem. They should give concrete legislative measures and comment on the effectiveness of the measures in different perspectives, such as the effectiveness of enforcement of the measures, the efforts of private sectors and the public, as well as government investment in the anti-pollution measures. Extensive and accurate use of geographical terminology should be used in the answers.

General comments and recommendations

1. Candidates should build up a more solid foundation in geographical concepts. Accurate and specific geographical terms should be used in the answers.

2. Candidates should learn to acquire more knowledge from websites, especially those of government departments, which can provide more updated information on the measures adopted to solve current issues.

3. Candidates should present their ideas systematically, especially in making comparison, which is very important in answering the short essay questions.

4. Candidates should read the information provided in the data-based questions carefully and avoid overlooking some important data.