香港中學文憑考試
Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination

Geography

2021
Question Papers

(with marking schemes and comments on candidates' performance)

香港考試及評核局
**Hong Kong
Examinations and
Assessment Authority**

Paper 1 Section A

The average number of questions answered correctly by candidates was 10 out of the 20 multiple-choice questions. The overall performance of candidates was about the same as last year. Five questions in which distractors were more popular than the key have been selected for further discussion.

In Item 7, the most popular answer was Option C. Candidates choosing this option might have wrongly interpreted the semi-molten state of part of layer Y (mantle) to be liquid for the whole layer Y.

Q.7   Refer to the figure below which shows the structure of the earth.
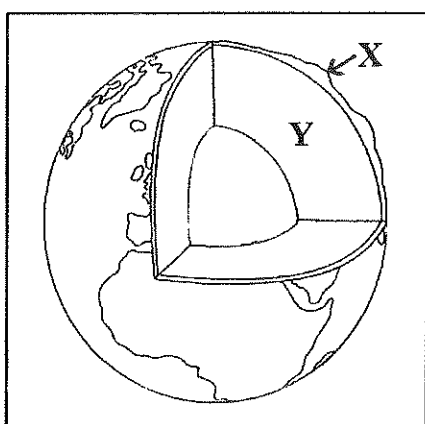

(Figure not drawn to scale)

Which of the following pairs of comparison between layers X and Y in the above figure is/ are correct?

		Layer X	Layer Y
(1)	Density	lower	higher
(2)	Physical state	solid	liquid
(3)	Chemical composition	magnesium	aluminum

*A.	(1) only	(35%)
B.	(3) only	(5%)
C.	(1) and (2) only	(50%)
D.	(2) and (3) only	(10%)

54

In Item 8, the most popular answer was Option D. Candidates choosing this option might have mistaken magma for lava in the formation of a volcano.

Q.8   Refer to the photograph below which shows a tectonic feature.
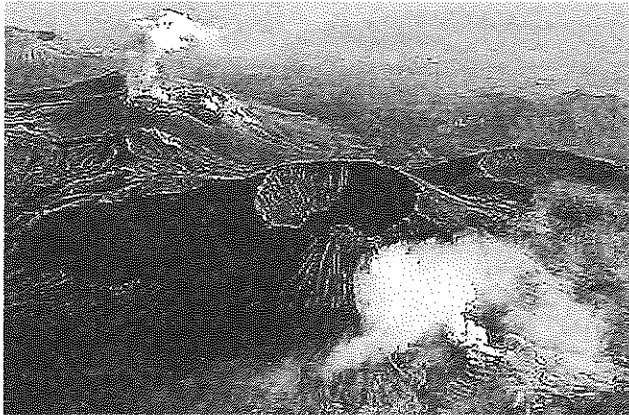
Which of the following statements about the formation of the tectonic feature is/ are correct?

(1)   It is resulted from the collision of two continental plates.
(2)   It is formed by the cooling and solidification of magma.
(3)   It is a resultant landform of extrusive vulcanicity.

A.	(1) only	(5%)
*B.	(3) only	(23%)
C.	(1) and (2) only	(7%)
D.	(2) and (3) only	(65%)

In Item 10, more candidates chose options other than the answer key of Option C. They demonstrated an incorrect concept of longshore drift.

Q.10　Refer to the aerial photograph below.
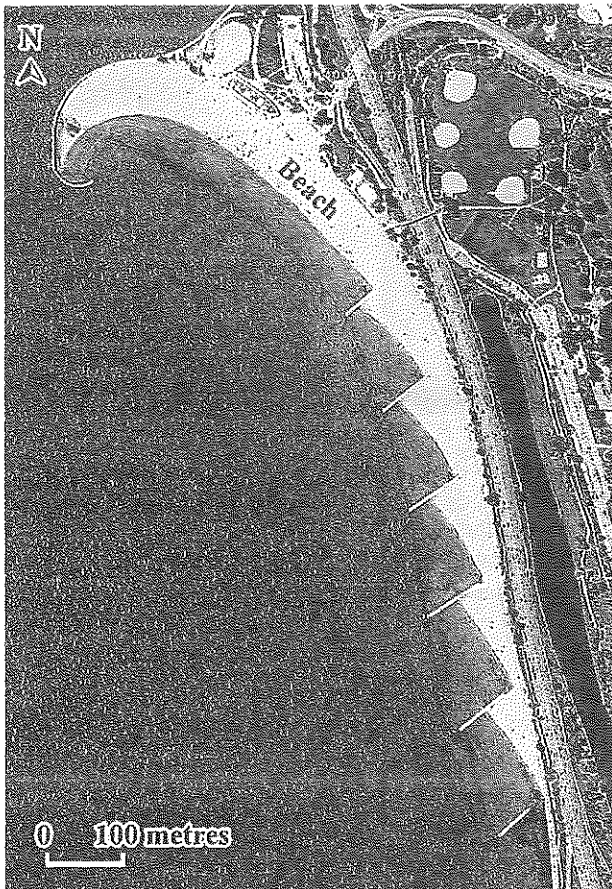
The direction of the prevailing wind in this area is _____.

A.	northeast		(28%)
B.	southeast		(25%)
*C.	southwest		(18%)
D.	northwest		(29%)

In Item 12, the most popular answer was Option C. Candidates choosing this option might have wrongly concluded that transnational enterprises would intentionally shift pollution problems to less developed countries by setting up production lines there.

Q.12   The reasons transnational enterprises set up production lines in less developed countries are _____.

(1)   to expand the market
(2)   to lower the costs of production
(3)   to shift the pollution problems to less developed countries

*A.	(1) and (2) only	(30%)
B.	(1) and (3) only	(1%)
C.	(2) and (3) only	(38%)
D.	(1), (2) and (3)	(31%)

In Item 17, the most popular answer was Option C. Candidates choosing this option might have confused the characteristics of decomposers and parasitic plants.

Q.17   Refer to the photograph below which shows one of the biotic components in the tropical rainforest ecosystem.
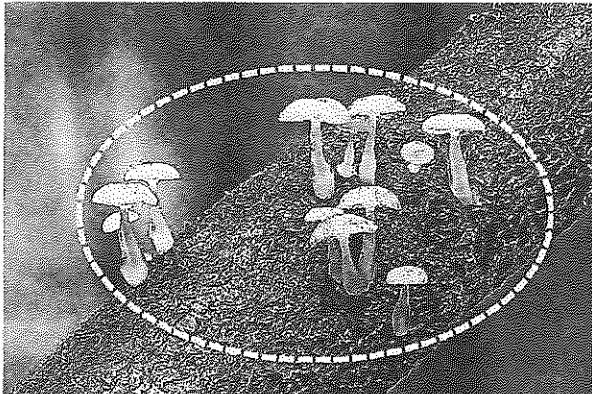
Which of the following is/ are the role(s) of this biotic component in the nutrient cycle?

(1)   breaking down organic matters
(2)   absorbing nutrients from the host
(3)   producing food by photosynthesis

*A.	(1) only	(31%)
B.	(3) only	(6%)
C.	(1) and (2) only	(46%)
D.	(2) and (3) only	(17%)

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
1. (a) (i)	2	Satisfactory. Candidates commonly understood the basic principles of selecting a field study site. They explained the selection of area X as an appropriate field study site in terms of safety and accessibility with reference to the information in the question. However, some candidates failed to see the geographical setting related to the study in the question. Some candidates raised unsound reasons such as 'different land uses in the area' or 'each type of land use is more average in size'.
(ii)		Fair. Most candidates did not adequately understand the procedure of data collection. Most of them failed to specifically describe the methods of sampling and data collection. Candidates were commonly better in describing the procedure of mapping, namely the division of area X into grids, categorisation of land uses and assigning codes.
(b)		Satisfactory. Candidates commonly understood the basic method of collecting data by interviews. They were able to describe the method of selecting interviewees and determining the mode of interviews. However, some candidates listed only a few interviewing questions.
(c)		Poor. Candidates commonly did not realise the land uses involved in this study would be changing with time and therefore did not have any ideas about the secondary data required. Most candidates simply listed the sources of some common secondary data, such as the Internet, government departments and newspapers, etc. They did not elaborate specifically on the processing of the secondary data and the utilisation of processed secondary data in hypothesis testing.

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
2. (a) (i)	57	Good. Most candidates correctly identified landform X as a fold mountain. Some candidates in the Chinese version of the paper used the wrong word to name the landform.
(ii)		Good. Most candidates showed adequate knowledge of the formation of a fold mountain. They were able to explain the movement of plates and the formation of folds resulting from plate collision and compression according to the plate tectonics theory. However, quite a number of candidates did not have the concept of 'prolonged compression and uplifting'. Some candidates inaccurately stated that fold mountains were formed by the folding of 'plates' or 'sediments'.
(iii)		Satisfactory. Most students were able to explain the occurrence of earthquakes in regions of landform X. However, some candidates wrongly stated that the breaking of 'plates' or 'crust' would trigger earthquakes. Candidates commonly failed to explain more specifically why earthquakes are 'common' in regions of landform X and the relationship between tectonic activities and earthquakes. They also failed to account for the tremendous energy accumulated in the rock layers.
(b)		Good. Most candidates were able to explain why town P was seriously damaged according to the nature of the earthquake and the features of the buildings shown in Figures 2b and 2c. However, candidates commonly did not have the concept of earthquake 'energy', thus they failed to explain clearly the relationship between the destructive power of an earthquake and the depth of focus or earthquake intensity. Furthermore, some candidates mixed up 'epicentre' and 'focus'. Some candidates gave irrelevant answers such as 'poor rescue team' or 'lack of warning system', etc. They might have given answers without referring to the question.
(c)		Satisfactory. Candidates were commonly able to raise arguments related to the constraints imposed by the physical settings, such as frequent earthquakes, rugged relief affecting accessibility, etc. However, many candidates did not understand adequately the meaning of 'altitude' and described the relief of 955 m as a high mountain. Candidates commonly raised single-sided arguments without discussing the major constraints imposed by the human settings, e.g. insufficient incentives for reconstruction caused by low economic benefits. Some candidates listed a few human constraints commonly found in less developed countries that were irrelevant here.

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
3. (a)	10	Good. Most candidates demonstrated a basic understanding of urban problems. They were able to explain the problems related to the urban planning of Tai Po Market according to map information. However, some candidates might have misinterpreted 'deficiency' and described the merits of urban planning.
(b) (i)		Poor. Most candidates did not answer according to the question. Many candidates described the geographical site or locational characteristics of Tai Po, such as coastal location, reclaimed land, etc. Some candidates explained the general merits of urban planning without referring to the settings of Tai Po. Some candidates listed only different types of land uses in Tai Po from the map extract. Candidates commonly did not adequately understand urban planning in new towns. They were also weak in the concepts of 'land use zoning' and 'self-contained'.
(ii)		Poor. Candidates commonly did not understand accurately and comprehensively the concept of 'sustainable city'. Most of them explained only generally the provision of 'green space', but with an incomplete understanding of the term. Some candidates mixed up 'green belt' with 'green space', or inappropriately cited the 'country park' and 'nature reserve' surrounding Tai Po as examples of urban 'green space'. Some candidates put forward far-fetched explanations of 'green space', such as 'to increase biodiversity' or 'to slow down global warming'. Only a few candidates explained the role of sewage treatment facilities in environmental protection. Candidates' understanding of the social and economic aspects of a sustainable city was rather poor. They put forward explanations with weak reasoning like 'building railways and shopping malls to promote tourism'.
(c)		Fair. Most candidates compared the transportation facilities and accessibility of areas X and Y. Some candidates also considered the difficulty of land resumption in area X. However, some candidates answered from the perspective of real estate developers with irrelevant arguments, such as 'sea view is a favourable factor of constructing expensive and luxury apartments'. Some candidates suggested the favourable factor of 'proximity of area Y to the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the Science Park', but without further elaboration.

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
4. (a) (i)	67	Good. Most candidates demonstrated adequate knowledge of the climatic settings in the Sahel region with a detailed description of the local climatic characteristics according to the information in Figure 4a. However, most candidates were not so good at explaining how the climate limited agricultural development. Most of them mentioned water shortage in the region, but did not have an in-depth explanation of how the climate affected the growing seasons of crops, crop selection and farming scale. Candidates commonly mixed up 'seasonal rainfall' with 'unstable rainfall' or 'unreliable rainfall', or wrongly regarded water shortage as a cause of inadequate soil fertility and high temperature to be a farming constraint.
(ii)		Satisfactory. Most candidates described some of the characteristics of nomadic herding in the Sahel region. However, they were comparatively weak in the explanation of how this type of agricultural activity adapted to the local climate. Many candidates mixed up 'transhumance' with 'fallowing'. Although many candidates described the migratory path of the herders in the Sahel region, they did not explain how the seasonal migration adapted to water shortage or seasonal rainfall in the region. Only a few candidates were able to stated the adoption of extensive farming by the herders, which enables them to adapt to the climatic conditions by limiting the number of livestock.
(b)		Poor. Most candidates did not demonstrate adequate understanding of 'soil and water conservation' and 'management of agricultural resources'. They were only able to identify millet and sorghum as drought-resistant crops. Many candidates wrongly explained how the farming method could improve soil fertility; some others wrongly interpreted it as irrigation farming. They might not have studied the question carefully enough.
(c)		Fair. Most candidates did not demonstrate adequate understanding of 'sustainable agricultural development'. They repeated their answers in (a) (ii) and (b) as arguments in discussing which agricultural activity is better adapted to the local environment; or discussed the impracticability of the agricultural activity shown in Figure 4c. A number of candidates focused their discussion on raising agricultural productivity, not on maintaining a stable food supply. Some candidates raised general arguments of overgrazing and soil degradation without further explaining their causes and processes.

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
5. (a) (i)	64	Satisfactory. Most candidates correctly described the rising trend of total carbon dioxide emissions but some described the detail of changes instead. Many candidates explained the rising trend of total carbon dioxide emissions with the increase in energy consumption but a number of them did not account for the causes of the increase.
(ii)		Satisfactory. Most candidates demonstrated a basic understanding of the greenhouse effect. However, some of them failed to explain the mechanism of the greenhouse effect with the processes of absorption and radiation. Many of them explained generally with 'more heat is trapped'. Some candidates mixed up 'reflection' and 'radiation'. Candidates commonly described only the relationship between carbon dioxide emissions and 'temperature', or simply mentioned their 'positive relationship'. They might have overlooked 'temperature anomalies' mentioned in the question.
(b)		Good. Candidates commonly adequately understood the adverse impacts of global warming. Most candidates were able to identify the increase in seawater temperature as the cause of coral bleaching and to explain its impact on marine ecology and tourism.
(c) (i)		Good. Candidates were commonly able to explain the human and physical factors favourable for the development of solar energy in Australia using the information in Table 5b and Figure 5c. Many candidates described the location of Australia as being at 23.5° S or 'low latitude', which was too general.
(ii)		Fair. Most candidates were able to state that the use of solar energy might reduce fossil fuel consumption. However, many of their arguments deviated from the focal point of alleviating global warming, e.g. solar energy as a 'renewable energy' or a non-polluting 'clean energy'. Candidates also commonly failed to discuss the cost-effectiveness of developing solar energy in Australia according to the spatial distribution of energy consumption and production areas as shown in Figure 5c. Only a few candidates were able to state that global warming, as a global issue, requires the concerted effort of all countries to tackle it.

Paper 1 Section C

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
6	15	Fair. In the first part of the question, most candidates demonstrated a basic understanding of the coastal processes. They were able to describe and explain briefly the general factors affecting wave energy and coastal processes, such as wind speed and fetch. However, candidates commonly failed to respond to the two main points of 'southeastern coast of Hong Kong' and 'wave erosion and deposition occur simultaneously' stated in the question when giving answers. A number of candidates mentioned 'monsoon winds' in their explanation which was irrelevant to 'wave erosion and deposition occur simultaneously'. In the second part of the question, most candidates demonstrated a basic understanding of coastal management strategies. They listed some hard management strategies and briefly described the nature, functions and common pros and cons of these strategies, such as high cost and ecological impact. However, commonly candidates did not understand sufficiently the interaction between people and the environment on the southeastern coast of Hong Kong. Thus, they failed to discuss accurately the necessity of hard coastal management strategies and the potential conflicts brought about by their adoption.
7	40	Poor. In the first part of the question, candidates commonly demonstrated a basic understanding of the distribution of the iron and steel industry in China. They were able to explain briefly the importance of raw materials to the location of the iron and steel industry in northeast China, but they failed to account for the location of the iron and steel plants in the interior region with reference to raw materials and market. Many candidates explained generally the location of the iron and steel industry with government policies or strategic reasons, including some irrelevant government policies such as the reform and opening-up policy, 'Go West' policy and the Belt and Road Initiative. Candidates commonly did not have a good understanding of the influence of market. They did not explain the influence of industrial agglomeration on the location of iron and steel plants in coastal cities. Some candidates wrongly defined market as the 'overseas market'. In the second part of the question, most candidates demonstrated only an elementary to basic understanding of the impact of technological development. They stated briefly the use of scrap iron as raw material, but failed to further discuss how this development affected the relative importance of raw materials and market, and how it changed the distribution of the iron and steel industry in China. Many candidates described and explained the improvement of transport infrastructure, but not the advancement of transport technology in China. Some candidates put forward examples irrelevant to the transport of iron and steel, such as high-speed rail and air transport.

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
8	45	Fair. In the first part of the question, most candidates demonstrated a basic understanding of the tropical rainforest ecosystem. They were able to describe briefly the climatic environment of the tropical rainforest and its characteristics, such as stratification of trees and biodiversity. However, they commonly did not demonstrate the concept of complicated ecosystems. Candidates also demonstrated insufficient understanding of the interrelationship between abiotic and biotic components in the tropical rainforest ecosystem. They failed to explain the complicated structure of the tropical rainforest and the interrelationship of different components. Many candidates described the energy flow, nutrient cycling or the characteristics of plants, which were irrelevant. In the second part of the question, candidates commonly demonstrated a basic understanding of the impact of commercial logging on tropical rainforests. They were able to explain briefly the impact of large-scale and comprehensive logging on the habitats of animals and the food chain. Many candidates explained the impact of commercial logging on the microclimate or soil and water loss in the tropical rainforest. However, most of them failed to further explain how these environmental changes reduced the complexity of the tropical rainforest ecosystem.

General comments and recommendations

1. Candidates demonstrated inadequate knowledge and understanding of basic geographical concepts, such as the people-environment interrelationship, factors of industrial location, sustainable city and sustainable agriculture, etc. They should take note of the key concepts and learning points of each unit.

2. Candidates should understand the dynamic people-environment interactions and the changes of physical and human environments in time and space.

3. Candidates should pay attention to the balance of breadth and depth of content in answering questions, particularly the short essay questions. They should have a better performance if they could further elaborate on the major arguments and analyse the major factors in greater depth. They should not expect to obtain higher marks with unimportant factors and trivial facts.

4. Candidates showed improvement in answering questions with open-ended discussion. They were commonly able to make judgements and draw conclusions. However, they should respond to the question appropriately in the discussion. They should understand that there is no common mode of answering this type of question.

Paper 2 Section D

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
1. (a) (i)	41	Excellent. Most candidates were able to identify rock type K and describe its characteristics correctly. Only a few candidates misspelt the keyword or wrongly described the formation of the rock.
(ii)		Satisfactory. Most candidates described and explained correctly in detail the formation of the regolith shown in Figure 1c. However, very few candidates described explicitly the well-jointed structure of rock type K and explained the changing characteristics of zone M with increasing depth. Some candidates wrote a lengthy account of the process of spheroidal weathering without referring to zone M specifically. They often ended up their answers with the formation of tors, which was irrelevant. Many candidates mixed up the concepts of 'weathering' and 'erosion' in their answers.
(b) (i)		Good. Many candidates correctly identified the reclamation materials, but quite a number of them omitted the keyword 'fill' in their answers. A small number of candidates mixed up reclamation materials P and Q or wrongly named the reclamation materials as different rock types. They might be unfamiliar with the topic.
(ii)		Fair. Candidates found no difficulty in identifying P as the major type of reclamation material from its percentage figure, but most explanations were not based on the information provided, such as the abundance of the material in Hong Kong, its resistance to erosion or the demerits of the other two types of reclamation materials. Only a few candidates answered well by referring to the information provided, particularly in relation to the availability of reclamation material P at Chek Lap Kok shown in Figure 1a.
(iii)		Satisfactory. Most candidates wrote lengthy descriptions of why marine sand fill was harmful to the marine ecosystem, but their preference for reclamation material Q was not well-justified. Some candidates wrote irrelevant answers which were not based on environmental concerns or were comparing the engineering properties of the two types of reclamation materials. A few candidates discussed the topic well by comparing comprehensively the respective impacts of the two types of reclamation materials on the biotic, land and air environments.

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
2. (a) (i)	31	Satisfactory. Most candidates described the rainfall pattern of city X correctly. They explained the low rainfall and its seasonal pattern with continental influence and monsoon effect. However, some candidates mixed up different concepts of weather and climate as they tried to explain the annual rainfall conditions according to the pressure pattern of the specific day in Figure 2b. A few candidates answered in an inappropriate way by explaining the rainfall pattern with temperature data. They related the summer rain of city X incorrectly to the high evapotranspiration rate in that season. Some other candidates explained the low rainfall incorrectly with its desert location.
(ii)		Satisfactory. Most candidates were able to identify the climatic hazard correctly. However, a few candidates mistook low rainfall condition as 'drought hazard'. Some other candidates wrongly named the hazard as 'haze' or 'desertification'. They might not have studied Figure 2b carefully enough. Some candidates listed irrelevant human activities like overgrazing or overcultivation as the cause of the climatic hazard. Some candidates explained well the favourable conditions of the formation of the climatic hazard by referring to the information provided, but others answered poorly by simply recalling textbook content.
(iii)		Good. Most candidates gave a full account of the impacts of sandstorms on local agriculture. A few candidates mentioned the impacts on human health or the 'positive' impacts of the climatic hazard on agriculture, which were irrelevant.
(b)		Poor. Very few candidates correctly identified the increasing level of PM_{10} and decreasing wind speed as the two reasons for the lowering of visibility. Many candidates vaguely mentioned that the air mass brought sand and dust to Hong Kong. Most candidates simply copied the weather information from Figure 2c as their answers. They might have no ideas of the meaning of the question.
(c)		Fair. Most candidates simply cited the path of the air mass or the wind direction in Hong Kong as arguments without explaining the mechanisms involved. Some candidates were able to identify the pressure difference between city X and Hong Kong as causing wind to bring sand and dust. However, very few of them were able to explain the actual path of the air mass according to the steep pressure gradient and the effect of the Coriolis force. Most candidates correctly suggested the factor of 'long distance' in their counter argument, but some mistook air pollutants from the Mainland north of Hong Kong as the source of PM_{10}, possibly because they had overlooked the direction of the easterly wind. Many candidates listed arguments for both the 'pros' and 'cons', but did not have a clear stance in the discussion.

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
3. (a) (i)	5	Satisfactory. All candidates compared the journey times of the three public transport routes correctly in a straightforward way, but only a few were able to identify the magnitude of their differences.
(ii)		Good. Most candidates answered well by referring to the information provided, including the length of routes, smoothness of road traffic, number of stops and the factor of relief. However, a few candidates did not understand the effect of relief on transport routes. They either mistook route P as climbing over high mountains, or overlooked the overcoming of relief constraints in the two other routes by building a tunnel. Candidates scoring lower marks in this part either failed to make full use of the information in Figure 3a and Table 3b or simply recalled the merits of the railway over franchised buses from past examination papers.
(b) (i)		Fair. All candidates identified correctly the decrease in average loading rates of routes P and R after the opening of the MTR South Island Line (East). However, very few candidates accounted for the larger decreasing rate of route P, or noted the approximate 50% average loading rates still maintained by both routes after the opening of the new MTR route. Most explanations of the changing average loading rates by the candidates were therefore rather superficial, for instance: stating that railway transport is faster and more convenient than franchised buses in general, without noticing the different characteristics of the two routes. Apart from taking the journey time into consideration, the specific role of franchised buses to offer direct transit for certain commuters was rarely mentioned by the candidates.
(ii)		Good. Nearly all candidates identified correctly the increase in the average loading rate of route S after the opening of the MTR South Island Line (East). Most candidates also explained the change correctly, although the role of route S to provide 'feeder transit' or 'multi-modal transport' was not specifically mentioned.
(c)		Poor. Only a small number of candidates answered well by having their arguments based on the benefits of railway transport to the environment and its role as the backbone of public transport planning. Most candidates did not have much idea of the sustainability of transport development and referred only to the concept of sustainable development in general. Their arguments were superficial, like the reduction of air pollution, huge investment in the project and benefit to the economy of the local region. They seldom discussed the impact on the connectivity of the region and living quality of the residents. A small number of candidates wrongly mentioned the proposed South Island Line (West) could help to ease the traffic on the Island Line. They might have overlooked the information in the question that the average loading rate of the Island Line has already been saturated.

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
4. (a)	23	Good. Most candidates correctly described the climatic conditions of Jiangmen, but a few of them copied only the temperature and rainfall figures in Figure 4a without any description. Some candidates wrongly explained the influence of climate on local farming instead of the 'farming calendar', thus they overlooked the seasonal pattern of early-season rice and late-season rice cultivation. Some candidates wrongly regarded vegetables as crops preferring a 'cool, dry winter', whereas they should be grown as a catch-crop using irrigation water in winter in the farming calendar. A few candidates included irrelevant factors such as relief, soil and drainage in their answers.
(b)		Good. Most candidates correctly described the increasing output of all major farm products, the increasing share of vegetable and fruit and the decreasing share of rice. However, they did not use well or misused other information in Table 4b. A small number of candidates wrote lengthy descriptions of all the data in Table 4b without correctly relating them to the changes in output of the farm products. Some candidates explained by recalling textbook content instead of interpreting and analysing the relevant data provided, including the increases in 'GDP per capita', 'irrigated area' and 'total highway length'.
(c) (i)		Fair. Most candidates mentioned that mechanisation helped to save labour and to improve the efficiency of farm work. However, some candidates gave irrelevant explanations of how urbanisation caused the shortage and the rising cost of farm labour. Very few candidates were able to identify the transplanting and harvesting functions of the machines shown in Figure 4c, thus they failed to explain specifically how the machines improved the quality of farm work. Some candidates mentioned briefly that the machines helped to increase the rice yield, instead of correctly inferring the increase in yield per capita with less labour input.
(ii)		Poor. Most candidates discussed only generally the applicability of farm mechanisation to vegetable and fruit cultivation in Jiangmen as they failed to identify the farming machines in Figure 4c. Some candidates gave vague answers that farming machines would 'damage' the vegetables and fruits, or repeated their answers of the merits of farm mechanisation in (c) (i). Other candidates put forward far-fetched answers, such as the availability of capital and education level of farmers. Only a few candidates had a good discussion with reference to the different nature of the crops, the ways of mechanisation and the scale of farming.

Paper 2 Section E

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
5	35	Fair.
		In the first part of the question, most candidates only provided a brief account of the relationship between weathering and mass wasting in Hong Kong. They commonly explained how rainstorms would lead to the occurrence of landslides. Some candidates cited correct examples of major landslides in Hong Kong in recent years. Most candidates mentioned 'increasing shear stress, decreasing shear strength' in their answers, but did not explain well the roles of water in different mechanisms. Only a few candidates stated that a small amount of water could increase the cohesion of slope materials. Some candidates cited rockfall, which is a less common form of mass wasting in Hong Kong, to explain its relationship with water. However, they mistook rainwater as being the triggering factor of rockfalls, but it indeed causes rocks to fall by acting as a chemical weathering agent to decrease the shear strength of slope materials. Some other candidates wrongly cited rockfalls in coastal areas as a form of mass wasting related to the work of water, but the primary agent involved should be wave erosion. Candidates commonly made the mistake of citing rainwater erosion in badland areas as a factor causing mass wasting. Some candidates had the misconception that physical weathering by heating and cooling of rocks due to daily temperature change was common in Hong Kong. These mistakes showed that candidates' knowledge of weathering, mass wasting and erosion was inadequate.
		In the second part of the question, many candidates discussed both the positive and negative impacts of human activities. However, some candidates overlooked the relationship between water and mass wasting, and cited some human activities like cutting or levelling of slopes, installing soil nails, building retaining walls, constructing squatters on slopes, planting trees to bind the slope materials, etc., which were irrelevant to the question. Candidates should explain how human activities affect slope drainage to prevent the increase in shear stress and decrease in shear strength in their discussion. Most candidates provided vague and contradictory answers of the role of vegetation, i.e. deforestation and afforestation, on the relationship between water and mass wasting. They mentioned that trees helped reduce mass wasting by holding the soil particles, and trees also favour rainwater infiltrating into the soil, which in fact could increase the occurrence of mass wasting. Very few candidates understood the role of vegetation in preventing mass wasting by reducing the amount of water entering the soil through interception, absorption and evapotranspiration. However, they may not be able to prevent the occurrence of deep-seated landslides.

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
6	36	Satisfactory.

Satisfactory.

In the first part of the question, most candidates correctly explained the difference in the angle of insolation as the factor of latitudinal variation in the amount of insolation received. However, some candidate wrote wrong answers like 'the poles receive less insolation due to the longer distance from the sun than the equator' and 'the atmosphere is thicker at the pole than at the equator'. Many candidates explained the effect of seasons in detail, but some of them came to the wrong conclusion that 'more insolation is received at the poles than at the equator in summer'. They might have considered only the 24 hours of daylight at the poles in summer, but overlooked the larger angle of insolation at lower latitudes. Although many candidates cited high albedo at the snow-covered polar regions as the negative factor in the amount of insolation received, very few of them explained the larger amount of insolation received near the tropics than at the equator is due to the smaller amount of cloud cover to reflect solar radiation.

In the second part of the question, most candidates comprehensively explained the non-latitudinal factors affecting temperature. However, very few of them were able to make comparisons among places along the same latitude as an illustration. For instance, many candidates explained correctly the different heating and cooling properties of land and sea but some of them wrongly cited Hong Kong and Urumqi, which are located at places of large latitudinal difference, as examples for comparison. Candidates also commonly cited monsoon wind as another factor. However, though most of them were able to correctly explain the influence of summer onshore winds and winter offshore winds on temperature in coastal areas, very few of them illustrated their explanation with the temperature characteristics of places along the same latitude. Some candidates also had the misconceptions that 'Hong Kong has a maritime climate because it is located near the coast' and 'areas with high rainfall were cooler'. Some candidates explained human impacts, such as 'urban heat island effect', which is irrelevant to this part of the question. Some candidates mentioned the influence of 'typhoons' and 'cold fronts' on temperature, which is only short-term when compared to that of 'air masses'.

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
7	5	Poor. In the first part of the question, most candidates did not have a good understanding of the challenges encountered by the Hong Kong container port within the Zhujiang Delta Region. Some candidates briefly mentioned the ports in the Mainland as competitors, but failed to elaborate clearly on their comparative advantages. A few candidates mentioned the problems of land shortage and rising labour cost in Hong Kong but failed to relate them specifically to the declining volume of cargo handled by the container port. Most candidates overlooked the fact that Hong Kong is a free port where, except for very low licence fees, no custom duties are required for most exports and imports when explaining customs clearance at the border as a factor of the above decline. Very few candidates were able to comprehensively explain that the challenges encountered by the Hong Kong container port were due to the recent changes in the Zhujiang Delta Region, including the changing industrial structure and improvement in port and transport infrastructure, as well as the higher handling cost of containers in Hong Kong, the problem of cross-border traffic and the efficiency of customs clearance, etc. Although some candidates suggested the concepts of 'overlapping of hinterlands between Hong Kong and the Mainland' or 'different policies of the governments', they did not elaborate on them correctly. In the second part of the question, most candidates wrote brief and vague answers. Candidates who misinterpreted the first part of the question gave irrelevant answers in their discussion. For instance, some candidates cited the advancement of logistics management and IT applications, which are unrelated to transport when discussing 'the development of other transport modes in logistics'. A few candidates wrongly cited the passenger transport modes. Many candidates correctly mentioned the development of the Hong Kong International Airport and the third runway to promote air traffic. However, very few of them made further elaboration on the comparative advantage of the airport in cargo traffic and the trend of greater demand from the Zhujiang Delta Region for transport of high value goods. Some candidates named the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, river transport, the planned port railway and the High Speed Rail, etc. as alternative transport modes of logistics, without taking note of their respective functions and applicability. Candidates failed to answer satisfactorily in this part due to their poor knowledge of Hong Kong as a logistics transport hub and limited understanding of the characteristics of cargoes handled by different transport modes.

71

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
8	24	Fair. In the first part of the question, most candidates gave a correct account of the changes in the industrial structure of the Zhujiang Delta Region in recent decades. They described correctly the changing trend from 'low technology', 'low value-added' and 'labour-intensive' to 'high technology', 'high value-added' and 'capital-intensive' industries in the region with some relevant examples. However, a few candidates did not take the implementation year of the policy of 'Emptying the Cage for New Birds' into account, but instead provided a lengthy description of the changes since the reform and opening-up policies in the late 1970s. Moreover, some candidates mentioned the shifting of polluting and labour-intensive industries to other provinces and other Asian countries in recent years, which was not the original objective of the policy. A few candidates wrongly stated that there was a change from 'material-oriented' to 'market-oriented' and from 'heavy' to 'light' industries. In the second part of the question, most candidates showed little understanding of the environmental management strategies in the Zhujiang Delta Region. Some candidates only repeated their answers from the first part of the question about the moving out of low technology, polluting industries and moving in of high technology, non-polluting industries. Some candidates gave an account of the pollution problems in the region in recent years and some environmental protection strategies to tackle the problems. However, only a few candidates discussed how the aforesaid changes in industrial structure are 'responding' to such strategies. Some candidates might have a poor understanding of the concept of 'region' and included the environmental problems and related management strategies of other places in China in their answers. A few candidates gave far-fetched arguments such as 'enterprises might not obey the pollution laws', 'economic growth due to industrialisation might aggravate environmental problems', etc. Some candidates described environmental problems not caused by industries in the Zhujiang Delta Region, but instead by 'urbanisation' and 'agricultural activities', which are irrelevant. Candidates' arguments in the discussion should be based on the objectives and effectiveness of the policy of 'Emptying the Cage for New Birds', such as whether the 'policy' helped attain targets of environmental management strategies in the region or resulted in spatial shift of the pollution problems. Candidates should also take into consideration the socio-economic objectives of the policy other than the environmental concerns.

General comments and recommendations

1.   Candidates should improve their knowledge of key geographical concepts to provide accurate, relevant and logical arguments.

2.   Candidates should read the key terms of the questions carefully and interpret each question holistically before answering, instead of writing irrelevant materials learnt by rote.

3.   Candidates should make full use of the information provided when answering data-based questions. They should interpret the data rather than copying them as answers.

4. Candidates should choose to answer questions from modules which they have learnt properly. They should avoid attempting questions of unfamiliar modules by using only common knowledge, which may result in poor performance due to misinterpretation of the questions and wrong concepts.

5. Candidates should continuously update their knowledge and information when studying the various modules.

6. Candidates may apply their knowledge of different modules to answer a question, if appropriate, particularly in the discussion part.

7. Candidates should have a clear stance in discussion, instead of simply presenting arguments of pros and cons.

8. Candidates should cite relevant and precise examples to substantiate their answers when necessary.