1. Section A: Core

Overall

In this section both short essays were rated together to achieve the overall rating awards. Questions were generally answered equally to each other. The final overall ratings on C2 and C3 reflect the holistic assessment of this section.

The short essay format was generally attempted positively with students producing essays that ranged from 3-6 short paragraphs in length.

Question 1; Criterion 2 and 3
This question asked candidates to describe a range of examples of the physical geography of one Pacific Nation in the region. The definition of ‘describe’ in the course document is as follows: “to recount, tell of/about, chronicle, comment on, give an account of characteristics or features”.

In considering physical features, all aspects related to the environment (listed in the course document) could have been discussed. This includes, but is not exclusive to, location (hemisphere and latitude), configuration (shape, size), topography (for example: mountains, rivers, plains), climate range and characteristics, vegetation and degradation of the environments - preferably in that order so that each topic can build on the explanation for the next. For this question Fiji and Papua New Guinea were popular choices. Other Pacific Nations discussed included Vanuatu, New Caledonia, Solomon Islands and Kiribati.

Answers were generally of a high standard and included descriptions and the naming of a range of physical features and supported their descriptions with named landforms and features such as rivers, mountains, and accurate data relating to them, citing height (should be metric, some were in imperial), temperatures and rainfall. Some candidates chose to use adjectives to describe physical features with broad statements such as ‘inspiring’ cliffs and ‘majestic’ waterfalls. This is subjective and not what the question was asking of students. Strong answers began with discussion of latitude and longitude to provide understanding of location. Answers of the highest standard displayed an understanding between location and natural hazards with discussion around proximity to tectonic plate boundaries (and type of boundary) and land creation along with latitude and connections to meteorological hazards such as cyclones. Atolls and volcanoes were also discussed in stronger answers where this was applicable. Answers that correctly named the highest mountains, longest rivers, significant mountain ranges, surrounding bodies of water and climate and vegetation were frequent and students had clearly studied well for this scenario. Many answers also included discussion around environmental degradation through deforestation and supported with locations of such.
2. Section B: Australia’s changing roles

Question 3; Criterion 2 and 4

There was an equal discussion of either trade and security or aid; students did well to apply their understanding to show the nature of Australia’s partnerships in the region.

Students are encouraged to consider how ideological differences influence partnerships. Examples of human rights abuses should be provided. If discussing aid, specific examples of aid projects used to improve development should be outlined. Examiners were pleased to see reference to current trade agreements such as the Indonesia-Australia Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (IA-CEPA) and current issues such as offshore manufacturing.

Many candidates did well to provide a wide range of historical examples from post-World War II; especially discussing changes in partnership due to political leadership (i.e. Sukarno, Whitlam, Keating & Howard). Historical examples going back to Macassan trade were useful, but more contemporary examples allowed candidates to provide more relevant detail. Stronger answers showed awareness of recent Australian policy developments such as the Pacific Step-Up strategy. Terminology such as Official Development Assistance (ODA), technical assistance and humanitarian relief should be used to describe the giving of aid instead of referring to as “donations”. Referencing is not necessary but rewarded; however, Wikipedia is not a credible source.
Element 3 of Criteria 4, “predictions about Australia’s future role in the region” is explicitly addressed in the question and should not be limited to 1 or 2 sentences.

**Question 4; Criterion 2 and 4**  
**Overall**  
This question was generally handled most proficiently by almost all students of the 41 submitted. An understanding of both the nature of immigration into Australia and the reasons for it was explained well by most candidates. There were some excellent essays, one in particular was almost perfect, but candidates must ensure they attempt all parts of the question to receive the highest rating. It was clear from these responses that this topic was addressed exceptionally well by students.

**Criterion 2**  
Most students communicated correctly and effectively in essay form. Some areas that need to be addressed by future candidates include:

- When an acronym is used, and it is fine to do so, make sure the full name is written the first time it is used.
- DO NOT use the phrase ‘in this essay I will...’ in any essay. The marker knows that you, the student, is writing the essay, you do not need to tell them so.
- Avoid using generalised, sweeping statements as if they apply to the whole AAP region. Apart from being false, it makes your argument lose effect.
- Please ensure that hand-writing is legible.
- As this essay requires a degree of historical fact, make sure the ones you include are accurate.

**Criterion 4**  
Again, course content was addressed effectively by most candidates, but the future of immigration relating to their chosen group was a touch problematic. For example, the Vietnamese have all but adapted to this country and apart from residual racism, their future seems to be positive as many of the cultural aspects have been embraced by the Australian population and our international relationship with Vietnam is very positive.

Some areas of possible concern could be:

- When including statistical data, make sure it is accurate for the national group selected. A sweeping, inaccurate statement, (for example, 200,000 Vietnamese refugees/migrants came to Australia between 1975 and 1989) gives a completely different impression of immigration policies.
- The question and the unit asks for a brief historical account of immigration changes, but avoid making such an account the dominant aspect of the essay.
- Use of the Rohingya ethnic group as an immigration source may be accurate, but the numbers involved make its use in this essay problematic. Further claiming that Rohingya refugees housed at Manus Island or Nauru will ever migrate to Australia is false, according to current government policy.
- The White Australia Policy, in retrospect, was a racist piece of legislation, but the founding fathers never directly said that was their purpose, so avoid saying that it was designed to be racist from the beginning. A ‘Working Man’s Paradise’ designed for British settlers/descendants is not technically racist. In 1901 such discrimination was not perceived as racist.
3. Section C: Tourism in the AAP region

Question 5; Criterion 2
This section of the exam required essay format which some candidates either did not observe or chose to ignore, resulting in a lower rating for Criterion 2. Essay conventions such as using an introduction, body paragraphs and a conclusion were not always used. Instead some candidates used a report format with headings and dot points and, on occasions, just provided a list of paragraphs with no introduction or conclusion.

Better answers used appropriate terminology, were well structured, used grammatical conventions and gave clear and well-reasoned responses. Weaker responses were brief, used little tourism terminology, avoided using detailed introductions that addressed the question and did not always include a conclusion. Many of the essays were not sophisticated and did not integrate both destinations when mentioning the trends.

Question 5; Criterion 5
The complex nature of this question, with three separate sections, required care and many candidates did not address all parts of the question. Responses often ignored tackling the first part on changing trends and tourist numbers in two destinations, focusing entirely on the impacts of tourism and management policies. This affected candidate’s ratings for Criterion 5.

The three sections requiring responses were:
   a. How have changing trends in tourism accounted for changes in tourist numbers to two destinations?
   b. For one of the above destinations describe one positive and one negative impact tourism has had on this destination.
   c. What management policies could be implemented to reduce the consequences of the negative impact?

   a. Numerous answers were acceptable for Part A and better responses were applied to the selected destinations. Candidates chose to adopt a range of approaches to answering this part of the essay, most of which were relevant. Some described social (social media, internet, websites, global audience), economic (economic growth in the AAP region especially in China, higher incomes, greater disposable incomes), demographic (ageing wealthy population, rise of the independent traveller) and political changes (lifting visa restrictions) and linked these to trends in tourist arrivals occurring in the two destinations. Another approach was based on using the changing reasons for travel including cultural (dark tourism), environmental (ecotourism) and social (wellness and family). Some referred to why these destinations were attractive to tourists and how this has encouraged a growth (sometimes temporary) in tourist numbers. For instance, pull factors to places like Uluru aimed at visitors who wanted to climb the rock before it was banned in October 2019.

   Better answers were articulate, focused on the question and provided supportive information such as; statistics, quotes and references. Weaker answers avoided using numerical evidence and at other times quoted data that was inaccurate and illogical.

   b. The strongest responses to Part B described both a positive and negative impact of tourism on the chosen destination and gave relevant examples. Positive impacts alluded to economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits. These included: an increased standard of living for local people, indirect and direct job prospects and the multiplier effect linked to opportunities for local businesses, improved infrastructure and services, creation of national parks and reserves and enhanced cultural awareness.
and understanding. The majority of negative impacts described were environmental with littering, disposal of waste and water, and water security issues in Bali and Uluru being the most common. Other negative impacts referred to tourists’ disrespectful and inappropriate behaviour causing offence to Indigenous cultures in Uluru and Kyoto, economic leakage of the dollar caused by overseas ownership of tourist ventures including transnational companies (85% owned by non-Balinese), disadvantaged rural communities not benefitting directly from tourism being removed from the tourist centres, rising costs of living, employment inequalities created by local people being employed in the lower wage sector of the industry, casual and seasonal employment, land clearance for tourism developments removing forests or agricultural land, saltwater intrusion into coastal aquifers, cultural degradation caused by westernisation, increased drug and alcohol use and staged authenticity. Weaker responses lacked examples and were too general.

The positive and negative impacts were supposed to be for one destination, but a significant number of candidates gave information based on each of the two destinations in the time available for which they were not penalised.

c. This part of the essay was reasonably well answered. The best responses referred to current policies and practices that provide a possible solution to the negative impact being discussed; for example, the closure by the Aboriginal owners and Uluru Kata-Tjuta National Park Board of the walking track on Uluru, 26 October 2019 will help reduce erosion on the surface of Uluru. Other acceptable policies and practices were numerous and not all are cited below. Litter could be addressed by the placement of rubbish bins at tourist sites along with notices encouraging tourists to deposit litter in them, although subsequent rubbish collection would be needed to prevent them overflowing and polluting the environment. The effects of plastic on the environment could be partially resolved by banning the use of single-use plastic (styrofoam, plastic bags and straws) as was legislated for in Bali on the 2 July, 2019. Water shortages could be addressed by tourist venues installing dual flush toilets and encouraging visitors to reduce their water consumption by adopting strategies such as having linen washed less frequently. Some cultural negative impacts could be lessened by having tribal elders or indigenous people lead and design tours that avoid culturally sensitive areas (Desert Tracks). Establishing a cultural centre in the Uluru Kata-Tjuta National Park has allowed the Anangu to share stories and information about their culture which leads to a greater appreciation, understanding and respect for indigenous beliefs and traditions.

Weaker answers proposed general solutions without referring to specific examples of management policies and practices that may already exist or could have the potential to reduce the impact being discussed.

The most popular destinations discussed in the essay from Group A were Phuket and Bali, Group B Fiji and Vanuatu and Group C Uluru, Singapore, Kyoto, Siem Reap and The Great Barrier Reef were referred to less frequently.

4. Section D: Responses to national crises

Question 6 and 7; Criterion 2

Overall
This section required all candidates to respond in REPORT format. While the majority of candidates did respond in this format, a large number still failed to include clear headings and sub-headings. Spelling, punctuation and grammar were also of a generally poor standard. Most candidates had particular difficulty spelling ‘Philippines’ and ‘infrastructure’ correctly.
Time allocation is an important examination technique and candidates need to ensure they maximise the full 45 minutes allocated to this section. Many answers were less than two pages which meant candidates did not sufficiently address all elements of the question or provide sufficient evaluation and analysis.

Candidates should be encouraged to personalise Country A by giving it a reasonable and realistic name. Far too many candidates did not do this and either referred to their country as ‘Country A’ or names such as Lemon, Bob and Fake Nation. The use of already existing place names such as Hanoi is also discouraged, especially when they exist in the real world.

Most candidates were able to clearly identify Country A as a developing country and the best responses used the data/blurb provided to draw inferences about the level of development, population distribution, likely impacts and associated responses. Less successful responses either ignored this information or wasted time re-writing it in their report.

**Question 6, Criterion 6- Man-Made Crisis**
Only one candidate chose to answer this question and addressed the issue of sea level rise.

**Question 7, Criterion 6- Natural Crisis**
For Question 7 a variety of likely natural disasters were selected including tsunamis, earthquakes, floods and cyclones/typhoons. Better responses provided specific locations affected by the event, while weaker responses described the event causing the crisis as impacting the entire country. It is important to note, that whilst a country of this size could experience widespread economic and emotional pain of such an event, such events would occur in specific regions and locations with particular areas more directly impacted than others.

The standard of the answers to this question was generally good and some were excellent. It was clear that most candidates had studied and prepared for this section. However, suggestions for further improvement are provided below:

- Report format should be used. This means headings, sub-headings, dot points and/or a numbering system. Many candidates did not use any of these features and were therefore penalised on Criterion 2. Another point to note is the use of maps and tables. While some candidates used these effectively to deliver information, many candidates failed to provide a title for these inclusions or refer to these in their report. As a result they added little, if any, value to the reports.
- Candidates must refer to the relevant information provided about Country A in their answers. A short introduction is recommended, but this should not be so long that it detracts from the discussion of the chosen crisis. A brief description of Country A’s name, location, proximity to neighbouring countries and surrounding seas and the event that caused the crisis is sufficient.
- Candidates must adapt their knowledge to the hypothetical country’s location and data. It was also clear that some students had approached this question with a ‘one size fits all approach’. Many responses were clearly prepared and students were going to use them wherever Country A was located. Some candidates had huge figures for the number of people displaced (more than four million) or missing (126,000). Some also referred to the country as being ‘very flat’ or described damage to highly sophisticated water, electrical, waste and transport services across the country. Inconsistencies were also common eg, relatively small earthquakes (6.0) generating huge tsunamis (in excess of 25 metres).
- Many candidates included lengthy discussions about the cause of their chosen crisis when this was not asked in the question. While a brief outline of the cause(s) is appropriate, lengthy discussions of the direct and indirect causes was, in this case, unnecessary.
IMPACTS

- Candidates should use data to enhance their descriptions of the impacts of the disaster on Country A, and in their evaluations of the various responses e.g. “there was a 10% loss of homes in the city of…” or “30% of crops were destroyed in the north of …”. “Two years after the crisis 5000 people are still displaced and living in temporary accommodation”. Candidates who select huge death and injury tolls as a feature of their crisis should consider the loss of medical and other relevant workers and the impact that this would have on an immediate national response to the disaster.

- Discerning candidates identified a higher death toll with reasons such as a night time event, urbanised locations and use of poor quality building materials. Lower death tolls and injuries were put down to the crisis being focused on rural and remote locations and/or preparedness of Country A. Economic impacts were discussed as a destruction of resources, be it in primary, secondary or tertiary sectors. Stronger answers discussed a decline in tourist numbers and associated flow-on effect. Secondary impacts were also present in stronger responses. Examples included the outbreak of disease and lack of access to fresh water and food shortages.

AUSTRALIAN & INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

Responses here were mixed. As Section D was the final section for the exam, it was clear that some candidates were affected by time management and this aspect of the question was completed in a hurry without the necessary detail to address the question. Because Australia was specifically mentioned, it narrowed the student focus of discussion. Responses that included the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) as the driver of the Australian response were stronger. Suggestions for further improvement are provided below:

- In terms of national responses, better answers were able to relate Country A’s low GNI PPP and the high percentage of people in the primary sector to its inability to fix most of the issues themselves without the assistance of foreign aid and assistance.

- When writing about the responses to the crisis, candidates need to be specific. Other candidates focused too much on re-educating the population to enable them to live in other countries without looking at more immediate strategies such as moving villages to higher ground, building sea walls or combatting increasing salinity of the water supply. Better answers considered a range of immediate and long term environmental and social impacts and solutions and were able to effectively evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of each.

- It is recommended that candidates refer to the major effects of the disaster that they have provided in question a) when analysing the responses and their effectiveness in questions b) and c). In several cases these impacts were not referred to again at all.

- Discussion that included neighbouring countries (China) and other developed countries (including Japan, Singapore and Taiwan) in addition to the Australian response showed good understanding of the nature of an international response. In addition to this the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank and an array of NGOs, including the Red Cross were of assistance to Country A’s crisis. Some candidates found time to list a table with donors (both national and NGO) and their contribution to Country A. Strong answers detailed specific roles of Country A’s response teams, with the defence forces coordinating the immediate response within 24 hours of the event and with extra assistance (depending on the size of the event) coming in the first seven days and then longer-term relief efforts over the following months and years.

- Better responses described specific roles for assisting countries and aid agencies ranging from technical assistance and rebuilding efforts to food and water provisions to search and rescue.
ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE RESPONSE

The analysis of the success of the responses was the least well addressed part of the reports. Responses often provided a position of being effective without scrutinizing why it was so. Some candidates suggested reasons why the national and international response was poor and included why some aspects were handled badly. But overall, there was a general lack of scrutiny. Lack of coordination and communication were common themes for ineffective responses to the crisis.

Several candidates wrote at length about earthquake warning systems either not working or not having been installed. These are not available at this time. This is a more appropriate discussion for tsunamis and cyclones/typhoons for which such systems do exist.

While not required in the question, stronger answers provided a context for why the crisis occurred and gave rationale for how the natural hazard became a disaster. Despite acknowledgment of tectonic plates, correct names should be given. Country A on the map provided, referred to the convergence of the Eurasian and Philippine Plates. Students are encouraged to show their understanding of unique features of the region, however if not relevant to the geographical position of the hypothetical (e.g. mountain forming of the Himalayas) it should not be discussed.

Detailed responses applied knowledge of land degradation to demonstrate how landslides frequently followed an earthquake. When considering the impacts of the crisis, examiners were pleased to see discussions of the influence upon industries such as mining, tourism and agriculture as well as damage to World Heritage Areas and temples. One perceptive answer noted the damage to an illegal bridge and subsequent limitations in access to remote areas. Stronger answers also outlined variations in impacts across different areas of the country, providing names of particular sub-regions.

Successful candidates outlined the various ways other countries within the region responded to the disaster, providing specific practical examples of actions (such as the erection of pre-fabricated buildings during the reconstruction phase). More comprehensive answers were able to criticise the inappropriateness of actions in relation to cultural and religious beliefs (such as non-halal food being provided to Muslims). Better answers will outline a crisis that has occurred 9-12 months ago, as this will allow stronger evaluation of domestic and international responses.

Candidates are to be reminded that this section is not creative writing; the report should be formal and provide a holistic overview, rather than a personal narrative of individual characters. While it is essential that candidates construct a name for the country to create realism, names of known places or corporations (e.g. Coles & Woolworths) should not be used as this may discredit the overall discussion. Many candidates made no reference or acknowledgement of statistical information provided; these factors must be woven into answers (for instance, urban population percentage indicates the predominant livelihoods of the population). Representatives from the Australian Government writing the report could have been from an NGO or member of DFAT. It was pleasing to see many well-structured reports with headings, subheadings and diagrams. Success on Criterion 2 requires these conventions to be followed.

In the conclusion, judgements should be provided whether or not the country will be more prepared for future disasters. Candidates were rewarded for discussing the importance of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and evaluating the effectiveness of management strategies put in place to reduce further harm. Strong answers evaluated and gave judgements about the effectiveness of both the national and international response. Although many responses did well to identify the importance of International Disaster Response Guidelines (IDRL), analysis requires an explanation of why these guidelines are needed.