Australia in Asia and the Pacific

Course Code: AAP315110

2013 Assessment Report

SECTION A

Question 1 - Geography

Most candidates who attempted this question wrote on the two themes, natural hazards and population size and density, with a small number writing on environmental degradation and urbanisation. Some candidates had clearly prepared well for this section but others demonstrated a significant lack of understanding of the region and its geographical issues.

- All essays should have an introduction which outlines the countries and the two themes to be discussed. From the information given, it was not always clear to the marker which themes were under discussion.
- Paragraphing is essential.
- Essays should not be in first person.
- Colloquial terms such as “kids” should not be used.
- Some candidates wrote on only one theme, either human or physical. Others were unbalanced in their approach with only a paragraph on one of the themes.
- When writing about the theme of natural hazards, candidates should identify why a country is prone to a particular hazard, before discussing a specific disaster.
- Disasters discussed should be relatively recent ones. Disasters such as the “Thredbo landslide” or “Cyclone Tracey” are too “old”.
- When discussing a country’s responses to its natural hazards, it is important to examine and analyse both short term, immediate and long term responses. Candidates should do more than simply retell the story of a disaster.
- For the second half of the essay, the human theme most candidates discussed was “Population size and density”, yet several candidates failed to address either of these topics in their discussion. These must merit some discussion in addition to a discussion of population growth and decline.
- Candidates must provide relevant, accurate, current data when discussing why a country is young and expanding or ageing and contracting. Data selected must be accurate. Many students failed to provide any data at all. Data that would be useful in demonstrating population growth and decline should include the CBR (seldom mentioned) the TFR, CDR, projected population figures (2025,2050) NIR and the % under 15 and over 65, (also rarely mentioned). Candidates writing about the urbanisation theme should mention the % of the population living in urban areas in their selected countries.
- It is recommended that candidates spend some time discussing why a young and expanding, or an ageing and contracting population would be an issue for a country. This is important for Criterion 4.
- For both sections of the essay it is important to analyse (Criterion 4) how a country’s level of development has influenced its response to the various issues created by the two themes. Level of development was, however, not mentioned at all by many students, yet clearly, it will have a significant impact on how well a country can prepare for and respond to a natural hazard / disaster, environmental degradation, urbanisation issues or an expanding or declining population. When discussing pop’n growth, candidates should also examine the impact that level of development has influenced.
development has on why children are considered an economic asset in subsistence based economies and an economic burden in more developed countries.

Disappointingly, factual inaccuracies marred many essays. The Ring of Fire does not cause flooding, New Zealand is not suffering from the issues created by a large and growing population, the town of Canterbury (sic) was not wiped off the map by an earthquake in 2011, Sumatra is not a separate country, PNG is not flat and the 2004 tsunami did not destroy Java! Many candidates appeared to be making it up as they went along, writing essays riddled with inaccuracies and which demonstrated a very limited understanding of the region with no evidence of any accurate or relevant research into their chosen themes.

Question 2 - History

The candidates who read the question very carefully were able to give an outline of how the relationship since 1945 had changed with various countries such as Indonesia, China and Japan to name a few. These changes related to trade, defence, immigration and overseas aid. The better candidates then followed this with an account of change with one country e.g. Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia and Papua New Guinea. Weaker candidates just launched off with their prepared answer and did not give any analysis of change with one country. The ‘A’ answers were able to state that Australia at the end of the Second World War began to search for new alliances in order to secure the safety and prosperity of its people. They also pointed out that while The United States maintained a presence in the Asia Pacific region Australia set about focusing her efforts on establishing stronger links with Japan, China, Korea and Indonesia. It was also pointed out by several candidates that the primary goal of this shift was to ensure Australia’s own safety and to contribute positively to the stability of the region with the implementation of Forward Defence and through the formation of various alliances such as SEATO and ANZUS. Once again this is where the very good candidates also went onto discuss the economic relationship that Australia developed with Japan over trade in the 1950’s and 1960’s leading onto Japan being one of our main trading partners in 2013. China’s relationship was also well discussed by several of the candidates. It is so important for those studying history that they focus on a detailed study of one country within the AAP region. This is clearly stated in the syllabus. It is also important to use essay format. It means an Introduction of about 5-8 lines NOT one whole page and follow this with many paragraphs and a conclusion.

Question 3 - Tourism

Generally some fairly solid answers that covered all elements of the question but some answers did not concentrate on the two impacts the question required, but also included Socio-cultural impacts.

Some obvious faults, in no particular order;

• Length of paragraphs should not be approaching 1 ½ pages. Written legibility is also a real problem with some answers.
• It is always a good idea to give some general tourism statistics for the whole AAP region in an introduction. Although when used, they should be accurate- eg 61 000 people worldwide who can afford a holiday!!!!
• Need to use actual examples to support comments, not just generalise. Examples used need to be described more fully, rather than just named.
• In terms of growth, the growth in Chinese tourism is a key factor that should be mentioned.
• Use of the term ‘Death’ tourism is an interesting description but ‘Dark Tourism’ is the correct term to use when discussing this trend.
• Need to discuss positive impacts in some detail, not just concentrate on and describe in copious detail the negatives.
• Factual inaccuracies - Bali is NOT a country, Burma- Mynamar was not Communist.

**Question 4 - Societies**

There were 16 answers to this question. The focus was on the social features of Indigenous Australians and either the Maoris of New Zealand or the Ainu of Hokkaido, Japan. They then went onto discuss the problems that these societies face. Most essays were of a good standard. The major problem was that some answers were unbalanced with an emphasis upon the problems at the expense of the social features. One candidate outlined the features of Aboriginal Australians and then Torres Strait Islanders.

**Question 5 - Religions**

There were 12 answers. The four religions chosen were Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and Shintoism. The origins, beliefs and practices, changes and influences on contemporary societies had to be discussed. Only two candidates were able to cover all these aspects and were rewarded. Origins, changes and influences were frequently neglected while all answers were sound on religious beliefs and practices.

**Question 6 - Economic Systems**

Only one candidate answered this question on the economic systems of Australia and Papua New Guinea.

**Question 7 - Legal Studies**

There were only 5 answers on the Australia common law system and either the civil law system or the sharia system. Family and criminal law were the more popular legal issues.

**SECTION B**

**Question 8 - Geography**

While there were some good responses to this question, many answers demonstrated a limited knowledge and understanding of the region and its issues. Most candidates chose to write on natural hazards and population size and density. Small numbers selected environmental degradation and urbanisation. However....

• Several candidates seemed to be very unsure about the themes they had studied. Several candidates made up their own human themes such as the westernisation of the legal system, rural
urban relations, orang-utans and using aid to build schools!! Some other candidates wrote about tourism as a human geographical theme and tried to problem solve the 5 A’s! It is essential that candidates indicate clearly which two themes they are about to discuss in their answer as this was not at all evident in many responses. It is essential that candidates confine themselves to a discussion of a physical and human theme as indicated in the syllabus.

- Candidates should clearly indicate part a) and b)
- Using nearly a full page to regurgitate the entire blurb and / or to describe tourist attractions is a waste of time. Lengthy, detailed descriptions of the mechanics of tectonic plate movements are also unnecessary.

Part a) Physical Geography theme.

- In Part a), when writing about the impacts of natural hazards on Country A, candidates are advised to discuss a specific disaster, following some discussion of why Country A experiences regular cyclones, earthquakes or tsunamis. The question asked for a discussion of the impact that natural hazards have had on Country A, so simply retelling the story of a specific disaster is not sufficient. Environmental, Economic and Social impacts on Country A, needed to be discussed in some detail.
- Realistic data needs to be provided. For example; several candidates provided death tolls as over a million in a single disaster. One cited 4 million. This is very unlikely!
- Several candidates chose to problem solve in part a) even though it was not required on this occasion. It is important that candidates read the questions carefully to ensure that they provide the information required by the specific question. Unfortunately some candidates did not attempt Part b) at all.

Part b) Human Geography theme

- Candidates must read the “blurb” carefully and apply the information that it contains to their answers.
- Using appropriate and relevant data to demonstrate the issue under discussion is essential. Use what is in the blurb and add other likely data. Country A is clearly an LDC and this should be mentioned. To demonstrate a young and expanding population use CBR, CDR, NIR, projected population, (2025, 2050), % under 15, IMR and % using contraception. Data selected must be likely- some candidates had cities of over 8 million, population densities of a million people per square km and CDRs of 30/1000. To demonstrate urbanisation, use the % urban figure provided.
- The impacts (“associated problems”) of a young and expanding population on Country A were not well addressed, or ignored altogether, by many candidates. The impacts of increasing urbanisation were more effectively described by those who chose this option.
- It is important that the problem solving is not just a few lines at the end of the answer. Complete focus on a one child policy is not recommended as it is unlikely in this country, given its location and democratic government. Better responses focused on a package of policies which addressed the moderately high birth rates and/or the impacts of high population density on a variety of resources and living conditions. Solutions to the impacts of urbanisation were generally well addressed although consideration needs to be given to the capacity of this poor LDC to fund them.
- Evaluations in Part b) were often non-existent or disappointingly weak. Too many candidates did not provide any data to show improvements or otherwise, opting for the rather lazy “too early to tell” response. Some candidates stated there had been no solutions implemented as yet. This is not acceptable and does not address criterion 5.
• It would be very helpful to the marker if candidates indicated parts a) and b) and indicated specifically which 2 themes they are going to write about.
• Spelling and expression were often unacceptable. Students must write in complete sentences. Colloquial terms such as “kids” and “pretty much” should not be used.

Question 9 - History

Part (a) of the question was poorly done this year. Many candidates did not even include the date for independence which was stated in the “blurb”. Many also had Country A joining ASEAN and this could not be as Country A was located in South Asia. Once again some candidates had Country A joining APEC before 1989. The major disappointment was that candidates did not seem to show that they had studied a country from 1945 through to present day. Key events such as nationalist movements/ethnic tensions/ civil war/the holding of elections for a new Prime Minister/human rights concerns/ etc. were missing. This part of the question should be at least two pages. A very good website to use is www.bbc.co.uk/news. Scroll down until you see Country Profiles and click on the country of your choice. This site gives a detailed summary of the history of a country as well as a timeline of events. I strongly encourage students to spend time looking at a country’s timeline in order to help them with this part of the question.

Part (b) was well handled by most candidates. The issues discussed ranged from illegal fishing/trade issues/boat people/illegal weapons/overseas aid issues etc. Once again some candidates did not take the time to read the question and discussed problems within Country A rather than the issues that Country A had with its neighbours. Some also did not follow through with the problem solving which meant that they did not do well on Criterion 5. Spelling is a major problem for many candidates. The word ‘border’ is NOT spelt ‘boarders’ when referring to the ‘borders of a country’.

This part of the question should be set out under these headings

• Issues/problems with other countries
• How the government managed the issues/problems
• How successful has the government been?

If this happens then candidates are less likely to miss out on the problem solving.

Question 10 - Tourism

This question was generally well handled by most candidates demonstrating a sound understanding of the topic. It was especially pleasing to note most candidates addressing all aspects of the question and on average writing at least four pages. Those who used the data and applied their knowledge of tourism to their hypothetical country and made it come alive did better than those who talked generally about Country A. A balance between reasons for the changes in international tourist numbers and the social/cultural and environmental impacts was expected. Some candidates disadvantaged themselves by spending too much time on one section at the expense of the other. One disappointing element to responses was the lack of evaluation on the success of government policies and decisions. Many candidates were comfortable in explaining what the government has done to minimize negative impacts but this was not followed up with an evaluation.
a) Factors such as low cost of travel, technology, better infrastructure, stable government, role of the media, historical factors and tourists wanting to experience a different and unique culture were just some of the reasons given by the very good answers when discussing the reasons behind the growth up to 2012. Other candidates responded to the question from the point of view as to what Country A had to offer and why this had increased tourism numbers. These included such things as culture, scenery, bush walking and eco-tourism ventures. What was disappointing with this approach was that these things were mostly discussed in a general nature rather than locating them in Country A, naming them, and saying what made them special and so why tourists would want to come.

b) Candidates showed a good knowledge of social/cultural and environmental impacts; however, the major disappointment was the lack of positive impacts. Candidates were able to write at length on the negative and forgot the positive. The major positives for environment were related to setting up of national parks, eco-tourism ventures, improvement of the infrastructure of particular areas, more employment and higher paid jobs. Negative impacts building of resorts causing destruction of local environment – forest, beach and farmland, pollution, litter and waste. Some of the management practices mentioned were more eco-tourist ventures to be established, recycling of waste and introducing a carrying capacity for some ventures and the predictable ‘hire locals to pick up the rubbish’ response. Significant deforestation was an impact that was regularly used by candidates. Resort development on coastlines and inland for eco-resorts to cope with rapidly increasing tourist demand were part of many responses. Again, these scenarios showed a lack of understanding of the rather limited tourism arrival numbers for Country A.

One repeated impact was that of sex tourism and the associated crime and apparent degradation of society it brings. This showed a lack of understanding of data presented in the international tourism arrivals table. This indicated that students had prepared their response to this question. Terms describing sex tourism as ‘rampant’ and ‘out of control’ within Country A are misguided and have not considered the data presented.

Some of the positives relating to social/cultural impacts were improvement in the infrastructure – roads and telecommunications which would improve conditions for the locals, more employment and higher paid jobs, and preservation of the culture. The negative impacts were increase in crime, prostitution, drugs and gambling, rise in the cost of living, changes in the lifestyle meaning that some, if not all, of the old ways were no longer obvious. The major management practice for social/cultural impact was the establishment of a Code of Conduct and education of the tourists. Some suggested that videos should be shown on the inbound flight and the assumption is that tourists would understand the do’s and don’ts.

The main positive cultural impacts included preservation of the culture, cultural awareness (both of Country A and visiting cultures), new perspectives on certain moral conduct such as treatment of women and improved access to infrastructure. Negative impacts included the Westernisation and commodification of Country A’s culture (through introduction of McDonald’s, alcohol etc), lack of respect and understanding, sex tourism, ignoring dress codes and codes of conduct in general, taking photos without permission and staged authenticity, the latter typically discussed in relation to a shortened dance routine.
Question 11

Societies

There were two answers and both lacked balance between Parts (a) and (b). Part (b) was brief and hence ratings on Criterion 3 suffered.

Question 12

Religions

The twelve answers focused on Islam, Hinduism and Theravadan Buddhism, which were logical given Country A’s location in the Indian Ocean. The major beliefs and practices of these three religions were well known. Part (b) was answered better than in previous years with students having a good grasp of the historical context of religious conflict in this multicultural society and the giving an explanation of the government’s handling of the situation and the success.

Question 13

Economic Systems

No one answered this question

Question 14

Legal Systems

One answer described the common law system and the other the civil legal system. The legal issue was family law and drug trafficking and both showed little evidence of problem solving.

SECTION C

Question 15

Overseas Aid

GENERAL POINTS

• must label part a), part b)
• Indicating part a) and b) does not constitute a report.
• Report format must be used and it needs to be more than just a few dot points.
  Candidates are advised to use the question as a guide for appropriate headings for the report. Many used headings which had little relevance to the question and were obviously taken directly from class notes or another assignment.
• Reports should not be written in first person and the language used should be formal in nature.
• Dot points are ok, but candidates who use them should be careful not to be too brief in their descriptions.
• Definitions of ‘Aid’ terminology and lists of all the millennium goals are not required.
• A high number of candidates mixed up parts a) and b) by discussing the problem solving following the description of each specific aid program. This is not recommended. Follow the question as written.
• The money value for projects needs to match the type of project, ie spending $500,000 on building 50 schools countrywide does not seem feasible.
• The projects described in part (a) should then be used in part (b) to problem solve.

The report must refer to locations, places in Country A. Make the country sound real. Most Aid does not concentrate on the whole country.

PART A

• It is important that candidates read the question carefully and provide what is required. This varies from year to year. Few candidates discussed the benefits of the various aid programs as required this year. Many candidates wrote about projects provided by other Aid donors, when the question clearly refers to AusAid programmes.
• These programs should be likely ones for the level of development of Country A and descriptions should be detailed and specific. “Reducing poverty and hunger”, “Improving education” and “world disaster risk reduction strategies” are all worthy goals but are not likely individual aid projects funded by AusAid in Country A.
• Providing emergency aid following a natural disaster is a good project, but some candidates focused solely on this topic. There should be some discussion of other programs targeting issues like health, education, economic development etc., especially given that Country A is a poor LDC with a low GNIppp, a moderately high birth rate and a high percentage rural population.

PART B  …the problem solving.

• Again, candidates must adapt their knowledge to answer the specific question asked; ie; what are the problems that have occurred with these Aid programs? In what ways have these programs been managed? (the solutions) and evaluate how successfully these have been managed?
• These problems and solutions must relate to the projects already referred to in part a). Several candidates wrote about totally different projects.
• Solutions need to be feasible. Providing piped water to the entire island with 10,000 dollars of Aid funding is highly unlikely.
• Evaluation was often missed altogether or, exceedingly general in nature. Data should be provided to show improvements (or otherwise) Appropriate evaluations should not be avoided with comments like “they were all too sad to evaluate the program” or “‘this report will avoid a final evaluation of the likelihood of success of AusAid’s aid program’.
• A conclusion to the report is recommended.
Question 16

Multinational Companies

One poor quality answer
## Award Distribution

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## Student Distribution (SA or better)

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