Version

AQA

**General Certificate of Education (A-level)
January 2013**

Anthropology **ANTH3**

(Specification 2110)

Unit 3: Global and Local: Societies, Environments and Globalisation

Report on the Examination

ANTH3

General

A relatively small number of students took the ANTH3 examination and therefore broad generalisations on the performance of the cohort as a whole are not easy to produce. However, it is possible to state that a few students produced outstanding work; some students performed extremely well and many produced very sound scripts.

No question appeared to cause any particular difficulties for students. Answers for the most part were of sufficient length and most students attempted all the required questions. In section B, all students answered question 04 and approximately two thirds answered question 06.

Positive features

- Most students attempted all required questions.
- There was an awareness of the specific demands of Unit 3, particularly the connections between specific topics and issues related to globalisation, and the synoptic requirements of the unit.
- There was use of detailed, contextualised ethnographic studies in particular in Section B (in relation to globalisation and its local impact, the work of western scientific experts and development projects).
- Students made appropriate use of relevant concepts and anthropological theories.
- Answers showed knowledge of the work of specific anthropologists (both ethnographic and theoretical).
- Some students were able to incorporate methodological discussions, where relevant, into their answers.
- In better answers, students applied a range of perspectives and concepts in order to develop their analyses and discussion of the ethnographic examples.

Key Issues

- There was a lack of use of anthropological theory in some scripts, with some students making no reference to any relevant anthropological concepts or theories in their answers. Alternatively, there was the inclusion of theoretical material which was not directly relevant to the question and which meant that students had less time to write material that was relevant.
- There was an over-emphasis on descriptive material, with a corresponding lack of analysis and evaluation in some answers.
- There was a lack of precision in contextualising ethnographic material, with too many over-general, and sometimes problematic, statements about vague, often exoticised 'tribes' or the presentation of uncritical and unexamined material relating to an imagined idea of 'the West'. Ethnographic material referring to indigenous groups or to populations in western countries needs to be fully contextualised and the source of the information, ideally an ethnographer/anthropologist, cited.
- There were too many discussions based on apparently common sense assumptions, particularly for questions 04 and 06, and some of these were problematic, such as those stating that globalisation was always beneficial or always problematic without reference to groups within a society, or alternatively, describing the benefits of development without making reference to sustainability. While such ideas are certainly in the public domain, anthropology students need to evaluate, assess and, if appropriate, critique

such notions and not simply take them as given. In short, there was a lack of reflexive understanding that the positions presented as 'correct' are themselves the product of the time and place in which they have developed and may say more about the person presenting the position than the people who are supposedly being described.

- Students sometimes located the societies that they wrote about in the wrong country/continent or confused the practices of one society with those of another.
- Some responses relied too much on theoretical approaches to globalisation rather than clearly relating theory to ethnography that is based in a locality.

Section A

Question 01

Some students were successful in explaining what is meant by 'hybrid' identity and in explaining two consequences of a hybrid identity for the individual. Many students were able to offer a partial definition of a 'hybrid' identity by identifying that this involved a mixing of different identities but without the notion of the creation of a new identity from this mixing. Many were then able to explain consequences of this mixing and develop these with specific examples. Weaker answers tended to only partially explain consequences by stating the consequence with no elaboration. These answers needed development of the consequences by use of a relevant example.

A good proportion of students did achieve full marks or close to full marks on this question and managed to do this in a relatively short paragraph of writing.

Question 02

This question was reasonably well answered by a good proportion of students who gained high and, in a significant number of cases, full or nearly full marks for their answers. Some of the responses that students were able to discuss included lack of acceptance of religious and/or cultural differences, and these were often explained by reference to contemporary or ethnographic examples, such as the use of education to teach about minority groups. Many students identified changes to legislation as a response and this was explained in relation to anti-discrimination laws or, in some cases, to border controls. However, others failed to gain marks often by failing to explain the ways that they had identified. In other cases, only one or two of the identified responses were explained. Some students listed one consequence and then developed several points about this one consequence; these students did not do as well as those who answered the question exactly as set. Some students offered more consequences than they did development of the consequences.

Students need to bear in mind the structure of the marks for this question: one mark for each consequence and two for each of these developed in a satisfactory manner.

Question 03

The best answers identified clear debates relating to human rights. Often these focused on discussion of the debate between human rights and cultural rights. Many students used the example of female genital mutilation to highlight this debate. The best answers were able to link this to specific groups and ethnographies. Often these responses were able to link the debate to gender as well as culture, to show a greater understanding of the nature of the debate. Students who scored high marks were also able to engage with the debate surrounding the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and its applicability to differing cultures. In many cases, the example of education was used to highlight problems of definition in the human rights debate. Others discussed the UDHR in relation to ethnocentric

and westernised views and the relevance to other cultures and societies. A further common debate was that of arranged and forced marriage and their impact on human rights.

The main weaknesses in answers stemmed, again, from not reading the question carefully enough and so producing answers that were not directly relevant. In this regard, some students wrote answers that gave details of human rights abuses without linking this material to debates on human rights.

Section B

Question 04

Of the optional questions this was the one that all students chose to answer. There were some excellent responses to this question, and these gained full marks. These answers usually included detailed ethnographic material that was analysed using suitable concepts and theories, including homogenisation, localisation and the commodification of cultures, as well as often demonstrating an awareness of how aspects of globalisation can either undermine or promote cultural diversity in different places and when used for different ends. These answers tended to focus on the local impact of globalisation by reference to groups within local societies. Students were clear how globalisation benefited groups in some cases and harmed groups in others. Popular examples included the Kayapo and the Yanomami. Other responses showed a deeper understanding of the nature of the debate by focusing on how an aspect of globalisation, such as technology, may have had a positive impact on a group. In this instance, the Kayapo again featured and their use of technology to highlight their plight to the wider world, as did the Zapatista movement. Material on mobile phones and their use in a variety of groups also featured in many answers. Many responses showed conceptual detail in their understanding of processes of globalisation and the work of Appadurai and Eriksen featured in many answers.

Weaker answers did not refer to specific groups, specific peoples, or to any clearly anthropological sources or debates on the impact of globalisation. These answers were mostly relatively brief and mainly consisted of a more commonsensical approach to the positive and negative impacts of globalisation in general. Some responses did note the impact of globalisation on different cultures but without reference to these groups being within local societies. Some responses did not seem to understand the anthropological approach to globalisation. The anthropologist may be aware of the global context, including processed, structures and institutions, but the vantage point is how globalisation is lived by individuals and groups in a locality.

Question 05

Of the optional questions this was the one that fewest students chose to answer. The best answers showed detailed and relevant ethnographic examples analysed using appropriate concepts and theories. These included a range of different scientific experts, including geologists, archaeologists, explorers and medical professionals. The negative impacts were highlighted with a wide range of ethnographic examples. Many answers considered the work of medical professionals and their work on blood samples and diabetes. Others discussed the issue of human remains and other objects in museums. Often these were linked to issues of colonialism and power relations. The negative impacts were clearly identified and evaluated in relation to the examples discussed, such as the misuse of blood samples or the ethical issues surrounding research.

Weaker responses tended to focus on a few examples, but without significant development or full consideration of the impact the work of the scientific experts on local societies. These answers tended to be generalised and limited to how there might be problems with the work of scientists, such as impacts on the environment, but without reference to specific examples. Other answers focused on the nature of power relations between societies by discussing colonialism and neo-colonialism, but without relating these to the work of scientific experts.

Question 06

This question elicited varied responses, with some very good essays at one extreme and at the other some very brief, very general common sense accounts of development projects. The very best answers usually provided a sound definition of both development and sustainability, often attributed to an appropriate theorist. These answers also usually included detailed ethnographic material which was analysed using suitable concepts and theories, including clear evaluation of the nature of sustainability in relation to their chosen examples. Examples included a range of dam projects and evaluation of the development of hydroelectric power against the loss of land for indigenous people. Other answers were able to discuss 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' approaches to development and link their examples to sustainability, showing a deeper understanding of the nature of the debate. Some students were able to effectively link theories of development to projects.

Weaker answers showed knowledge of development projects, but without reference to sustainability. These answers were often descriptive accounts of the projects and lacked analysis and evaluation of the impacts that showed a limited understanding of the question. Many discussed the building of roads in relation to development but were not able to link this to sustainability or impact on the environment. Some students linked their examples to notions of financial sustainability but without reference to the impact of projects on the environment or on future generations.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the Results Statistics page of the AQA Website.

Converting Marks into UMS marks

Convert raw marks into Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) marks by using the link below.

UMS conversion calculator www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion