A-LEVEL
ANTHROPOLOGY

ANTH3 Global and Local: Societies, Environments and Globalisation
Report on the Examination

2111
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ANTH3

General

The entry for the ANTH3 examination is still quite small and therefore broad generalisations on the performance of the cohort as a whole are not easy to provide. However, it is possible to state that a few students produced outstanding work, some students performed extremely well and many produced very sound scripts. The technique of students has improved, with answers of appropriate lengths for all the questions.

The majority of students were able to answer all the questions required. Question 01 did prove a little problematic for some students. Many of the answers focused on similarities and differences between cultures rather than cultural relativism. In section B, there was a fairly even spread of responses across the options. Question 04 was the least popular and question 05 the most, but this was marginal.

Positive features

- The majority of 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 health, globalisation and tourism).
- Students made appropriate use of relevant concepts and anthropological theories.
- Answers demonstrated knowledge of the work of specific anthropologists (both ethnographic and theoretical).
- Some students were able to incorporate methodological discussions, where relevant, into their answers.
- Stronger answers applied a range of ethnographies and concepts in order to develop their analyses and evaluations.
- Students showed the ability to use a wide range of material and also to apply material from ethnographies to a variety of questions where necessary.

Key Issues

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- There was an over-emphasis on descriptive material with a corresponding lack of analysis and evaluation in some answers.
- There was sometimes a lack of explicit comparison, with students describing one case in relative detail and another briefly, with no discussion of how the two related to each other or advanced the understanding of the question.
- Some students gave one-sided responses without engaging in debates in essay questions, for example seeing globalisation as only causing homogenisation in question 05 or only seeing negative of tourism in question 06.
- Some students seem to answer elements of the question but without reference to all aspects. For example in question 04 students discuss movement of people without reference to impact on health, and in question 05 they discussed globalisation in general rather than in relation to local cultural identities.

Section A

Question 01

This question proved quite problematic for a number of students. Many gave definitions of culture or bias rather than cultural relativism. These answers seemed to focus on the notion of difference between cultures. Some of these were able to score partial marks by identifying the fact that bias was a problem but without developing why this would be the case.

The implications of cultural relativism often depended on the definition given. Those who were able to give a full or partial definition were often able to give at least one and often two relevant impacts. Some implications were partial by linking only to the problem of not being culturally relative rather than the implication of cultural relativism for research.

Some students did achieve full marks. These gave a full definition which included reference to how norms and values are specific to specific cultures. Explanations of implications were often linked to how this affects the work of anthropologists and the best answers included relevant examples. Many of these linked to the study of culturally specific practices such as FGM and included reference to specific ethnographies.

Question 02

This question was well answered by a good proportion of students. Students were able to identify three consequences of global warming. The most popular of these included loss of land, loss of livelihood (often related to food production) and loss of cultural practices. Development of these points was accurate and often linked to specific ethnographic evidence.

Students seem to be well prepared for this type of question now and the structure of answers was appropriate. Students were able to gain full marks by writing three short, focussed paragraphs, one for each ways identified with a short development. Fewer students were writing a mini-essay in response to this short question.

Where marks were lost this was usually due to some points being too similar such as reference to two different ways in which indigenous people may lose their livelihood.

Question 03

The strongest answers to this question were able to display a clear knowledge and understanding of biological differences between human populations. Many students had a clear understanding of Out of Africa and multi-regional theories of migration and their impacts on human biology. There were also good accounts of biological adaptations to local environment with the use of Allen's rule and Bergman's rule as specific evidence. The example of sickle cell and its links to malaria were also widely used.

The weaker answers focused on more limited account of differences without making clear why these may occur. Alternatively these tended to be brief accounts with reference to only one adaptation such as skin colour.

Section B

Question 04

Although this was the least popular option it was well answered in many cases. These answers also usually included detailed ethnographic material which was analysed using suitable concepts and theories. Students who gained high marks were able to discuss a wide range of health implications as a result of various forms of migration. Some included both historical and contemporary examples. These included reference to colonialism and early movement and its impact on health before discussing more contemporary examples such as HIV/AIDS and Ebola. Popular examples of ethnographies included work on the Yanomami and Australian Aborigines.

Weaker answers tended to discuss a more limited range of examples. In some cases students focused their answers on the impact of the movement of people without any reference to health, showing a partial understanding of the question. In other cases there were discussions of health but without links to movement of people.

Often these answers had a wide range of material and examples of how countries may develop but without linking this to specific development projects. Other answers focused on the importance of preserving local culture but drifted into an account of commercial enterprises and their impact on culture such as the spread of McDonald's. Often these gave a detailed account of how McDonald's varies across cultures. Although accurate this was not well applied to the question.

Question 05

Of the optional questions this was the one that most students chose to answer. Those who did answer the question mostly gave good responses. Students were able to discuss a range of examples of the impact of globalisation on local cultural identities. The best answers showed a debate between examples where globalisation has encouraged homogeneity and westernisation (Facebook and YouTube) and examples where globalisation has encouraged heterogeneity and preservation of indigenous culture (Survival International and the use of the internet). The best answers used examples such as the Kayapo's use of technology and analysed this in relation to the impact on their campaign to preserve their culture. Other students looked at the take up of Hip-Hop in Japan and how this created a hybrid culture. Popular too were ethnographies on McDonalds and McDonaldisation. The best answers used these to illustrate both the westernisation of indigenous culture but also how global products and brands are adapted to fit different societies.

Weaker answers discussed how cultural identities are becoming more similar but without specific reference to globalisation. Often these answer included potentially relevant material such as on economic globalisation (McDonalds and Coke) and the spread of consumer products but without enough interpretation in relation to the question.

Question 06

This was a popular option with many students choosing to answer this question. There were some excellent responses. These answers also usually included detailed ethnographic material which was analysed using suitable concepts and theories. Many students were able to use a wide range of ethnographic material to highlight the impact of tourism on local societies. Strong answers

showed a debate between positive and negative impacts of tourism. The strongest answers used one example such as the Masai and developed this in terms of both positive and negative aspects. A wide range of ethnographies were used to highlight varying aspects of tourism including environmental and cultural impacts. Students were also able to use appropriate concepts and Appadurai's scapes were widely used as a framework for the impacts of tourism. Tourism as a liminal experience also featured in a number of answers. Commodification of culture was widely discussed and evaluated with reference to a range.

Weaker answers tended to focus on one side of the debate. Many only considered the benefits of tourism in terms of financial benefits to societies. These answers often used relevant ethnographic material but in a rather limited way and showing limited skills. Other answers were descriptive accounts of the nature of tourism but with limited references to the consequences for local societies.

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