

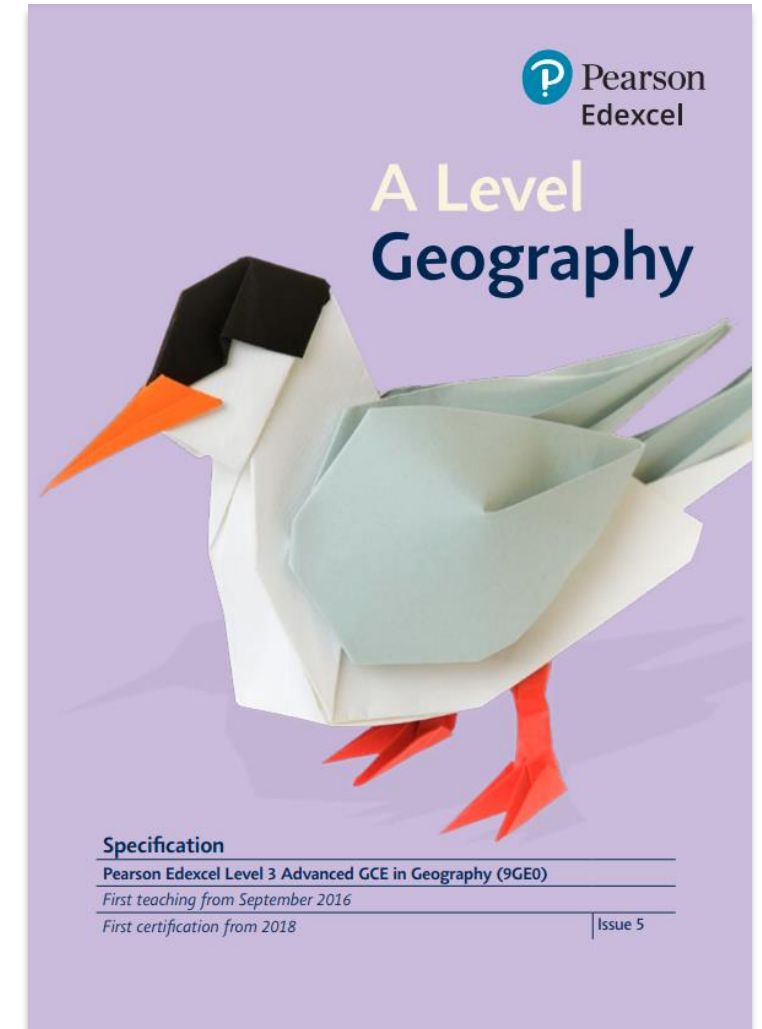
A Level Geography

Coursework Marking Training
Live Q&A Session



Welcome to this Professional Development Course

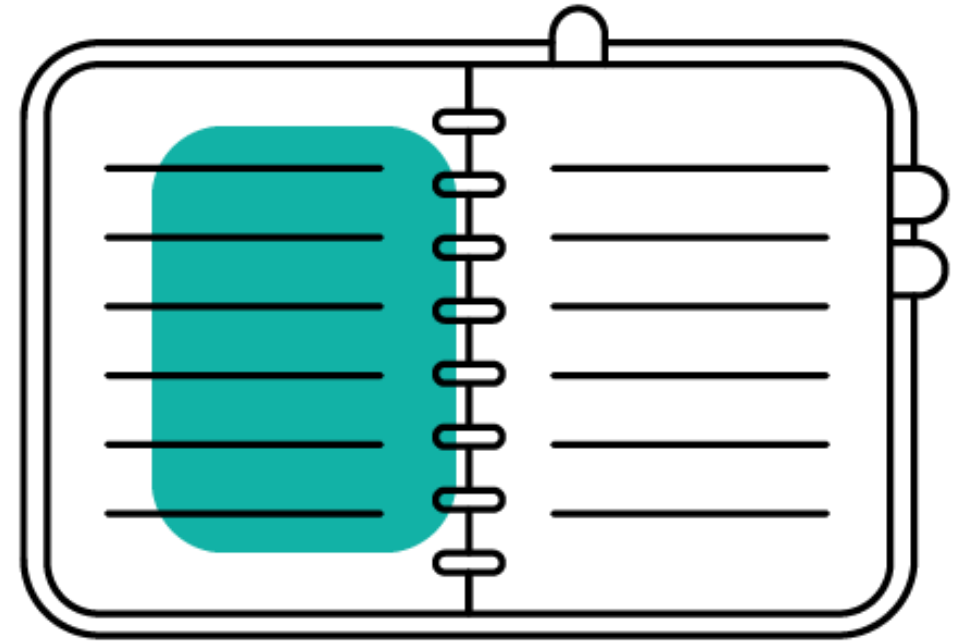
This training is for teachers of the Pearson Edexcel A Level Geography specification; it provides further support for using the coursework mark scheme.



Agenda

In this session, we'll cover:

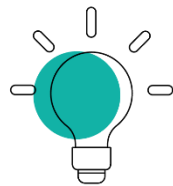
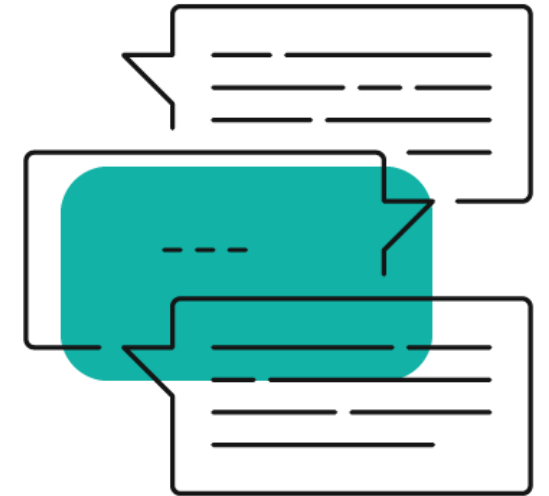
- the marks awarded to an NEA exemplar
- how the work met the criteria in the mark scheme and therefore why it was awarded these marks.
- some frequently asked questions.



Delegate poll 1

How long have you been running the NEA?

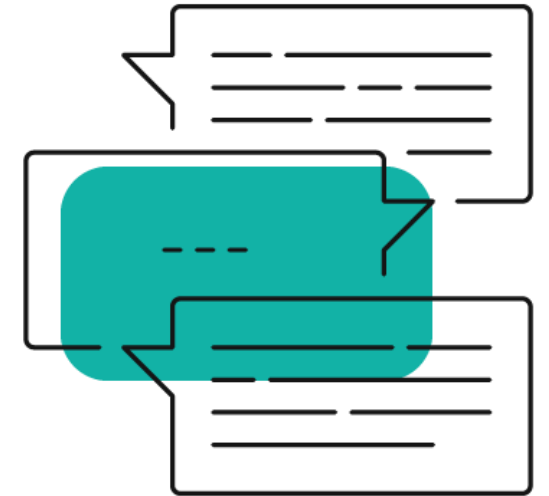
- First time
- 1 to 3 years
- 4 or more years



Delegate poll 2

What is your main concern about marking the NEA this year?

- Number of data collection techniques which are required
- Choosing the right level
- Comparability of data collected in the field and virtual data
- Allocation of marks within the levels





Sample investigation title:
Assess the conflict caused by
studentification in Clifton Bristol

Geography independent investigation form

Geography independent investigation form



Investigation title Assess the conflict caused by studentification in Clifton, Bristol.	How the title links to specification content 4A.5, b. Lived experience of, and attachment to, places vary according to age, ethnicity, gender, length of residence (new migrants, students) and levels of deprivation: these in turn impact on levels of engagement.
Planned investigation hypothesis or question/sub-questions What are the social conflicts created by studentification in Clifton Bristol? What are the economic conflicts created by studentification in Clifton Bristol? What are the environmental conflicts created by studentification in Clifton Bristol? What cultural impacts/conflicts are created by studentification?	
Investigation focus – indication of how the enquiry will enable the candidate to address their investigation title and explore their theme in relation to the chosen geographical area To find out whether studentification in an area (Clifton) creates conflict socially, environmentally and economically. And finally, to assess which causes the most substantial conflict in Clifton. Bristol is an easily accessible city by train, and I will be able to travel their multiple times easily. It is appropriate for this Project as it has two unis and is highly affected by Studentification.	
Planned methodology – Primary data will consist of environmental surveys and questionnaires (stratified), asking people's opinions on studentification. Secondary data will look at the housing composition of Bristol to see what percentage of Bristol student accommodation is.	Individual/Group data collection (Delete as appropriate)
Teacher's approval and comments - The investigation title needs to focus on the conflict caused by students, you need to pick and appropriate ward in your chosen city to make it manageable. Write out the specification links in full. Focus needs to be a discussion about why your project is appropriate and manageable. Consider sampling methods for your methodology, also frequency and timing.	

The Independent investigation form is a vital part of ensuring a successful NEA and it is crucial that the teacher gives appropriate advice.

Here the teacher correctly advises the student to focus on conflicts (more on this later) as well as advising the student to focus on one small area of Bristol.

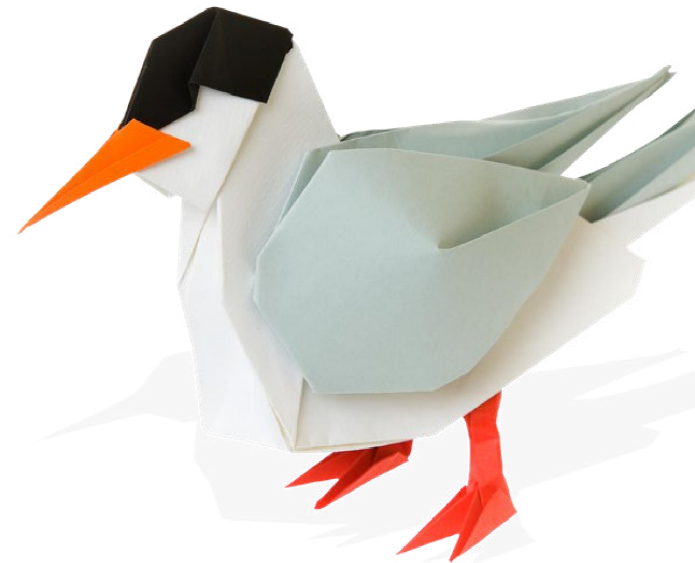
This is good practice.

Holistic overview

- Although there are marks for each of the four sections of the NEA, evidence for these marks can be found anywhere within the NEA.
- Best practice is to read through the whole investigation before awarding marks for the sections of the mark scheme.
- Careful reading of the final conclusions and critical evaluation section often helps in deciding which level the first two sections may be placed, as many elements of a 'good' conclusion and critical evaluation are found in the introduction and methodology.
- Mark criteria using the term 'throughout' are better assessed having read the whole of the NEA.

Part 1 – Purpose of the Independent Investigation

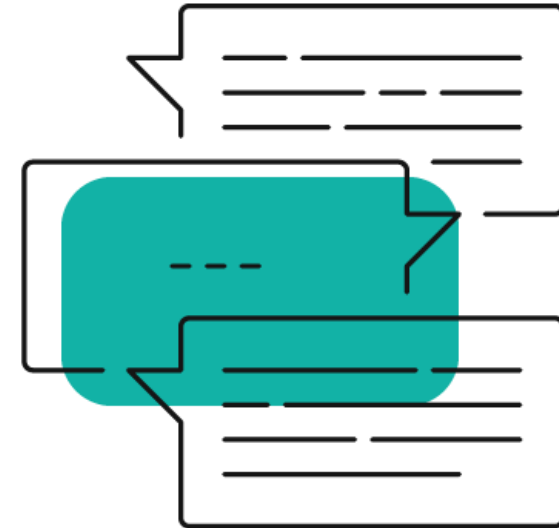
(NEA pp 7–15)



Delegate poll 3

What level do you think the Purpose of the Investigation is?

- Level 1
- Level 2
- Level 3



Purpose of the Independent Investigation

Maximum 12 marks

Level 3	9–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrates accurate and relevant geographical knowledge and understanding of location, geographical theory and comparative context throughout. (AO1)• Applies understanding to find coherent and relevant links between the investigation's context and a broader geographical context. (AO2)• Investigates a wide range of relevant geographical sources in order to identify/obtain accurate geographical information and data that support the investigation; research information is used to construct a justified aim, question or hypothesis that provides an appropriate framework for investigation at a manageable scale; planned enquiry process is logically structured and comprehensive. (AO3)
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Criteria

- Demonstrates accurate and relevant geographical knowledge and understanding of location, geographical theory and comparative context throughout.
- Applies understanding to find coherent and relevant links between the investigation's context and a broader geographical context.

Accurate and relevant geographical knowledge

- The student demonstrated this on page 7 where there are details on a possible spiral of decline caused by studentification.
- This continues throughout the NEA, with comments on the conflicts caused by studentification on page 8, the spiral of decline page 9, 17 and page 44.

Links to broader geographical context

- A feature of high quality NEAs is reference to relevant geographical theory, and here studentification is explained on pages 7/8. In addition there is consideration of the broader context of the study when the student examines the spiral of decline on page 9.
- The investigation would have been better if there had been clearly annotated maps with scales, as it was difficult to gain a sense of place from the three maps on pages 14.
- The study could also have been improved if the student had also created a conflict matrix linking the issue of studentification to named stakeholders rather just the impacts on page 8.

Criteria

- Investigates a wide range of relevant geographical sources in order to identify/obtain accurate geographical information and data that support the investigation; research information is used to construct a justified aim, question or hypothesis that provides an appropriate framework for investigation at a manageable scale; planned enquiry process is logically structured and comprehensive.

Investigates relevant geographical sources

- There is reference to a **wide range** of sources such as Avni and Alfasi 2018 on page 7, Dunn et al. (2021) and Carter (2022). There is a bibliography on page 12, 54, 60 and 61. It is best practice to only have one at the end.
- This research links to the questions selected on page 13 where the conflicts caused by Studentification are investigated.
- Each of these is directly relevant and specific to the location under investigation.

Research information is used to construct an aim at a manageable scale

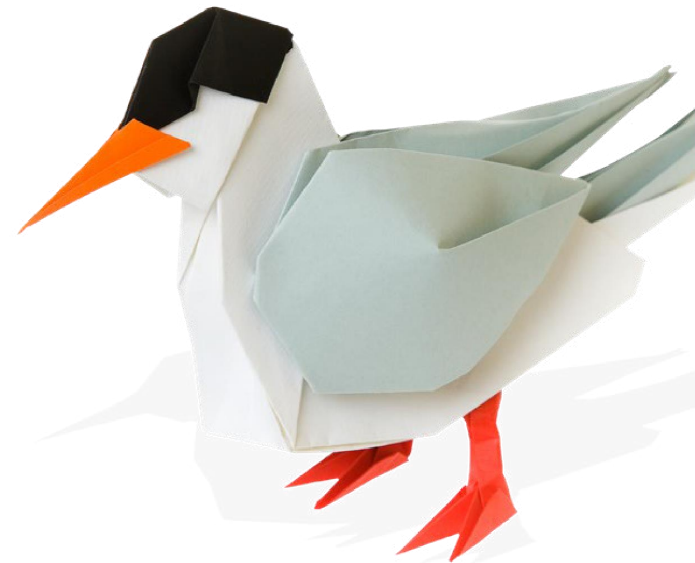
- The title and the three enquiry questions on page 13 are valid and a logical route to enquiry is explained and followed.
- The approach taken by the candidate is ***logically structured and comprehensive***. The candidate comments on the questions selected and explains what they are hoping to find out.
- The study involves three locations in one ward and so is manageable.

Best Fit – Level 3, 10 marks

- Overall, this section was thought to be in Level 3.
- Using the best fit approach, it was awarded 10 marks.
- To obtain 12 marks the student could have used a conflict matrix of the various stakeholders at this would have helped the student to focus in on their title and not to drift slightly to *impacts* as opposed to *conflicts*.
- In addition, annotated maps and photos could also have been used to help build an understanding of the location.

Part 2 – Field Methodologies and Data Collection

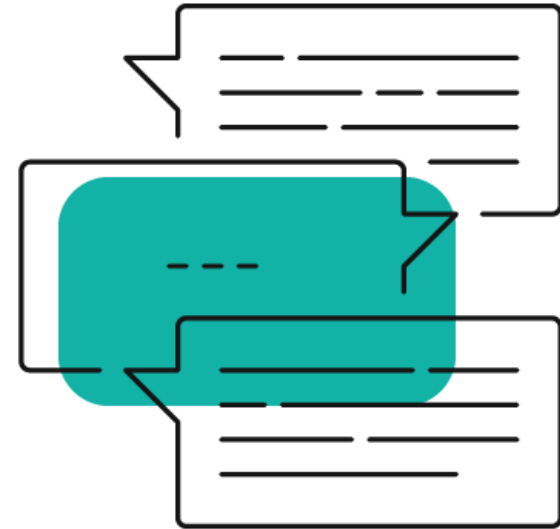
(NEA pp. 16–24)



Delegate poll 4

What level do you think the Field Methodologies and Data Collection section is?

- Level 1
- Level 2
- Level 3



Field Methodologies and Data Collection

Maximum 10 marks

Level 3	8–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chooses appropriate methods to collect a range of data and information relevant to the geographical topic. (AO3)• Designs a valid sampling framework explicitly linked and appropriate to the geographical focus being investigated. (AO3)• Considers both frequency and timing of observations. (AO3)• Research planning shows appropriate and relevant understanding of the ethical dimensions of field research methods. (AO3)• Obtains reliable data and information as a result of consistent use of methods with high levels of accuracy/precision. (AO3)
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Criteria

- Chooses appropriate methods to collect a range of data and information relevant to the geographical topic.
- Designs a valid sampling framework explicitly linked and appropriate to the geographical focus being investigated.
- Considers both frequency and timing of observations.

Chooses methods and designs a sampling framework

- The student collected a range of data such as property quality survey (page 18), decibel reading (page 18), land use survey (page 19) as well as secondary sources such as census data (page 19).
- There is some discussion of the temporal sampling approach taken on page 17 but it would have been better if the student had discussed the spatial sampling system of the three roads shown on page 17.

Criteria

- Research planning shows appropriate and relevant understanding of the ethical dimensions of field research methods.
- Obtains reliable data and information as a result of consistent use of methods with high levels of accuracy/precision.

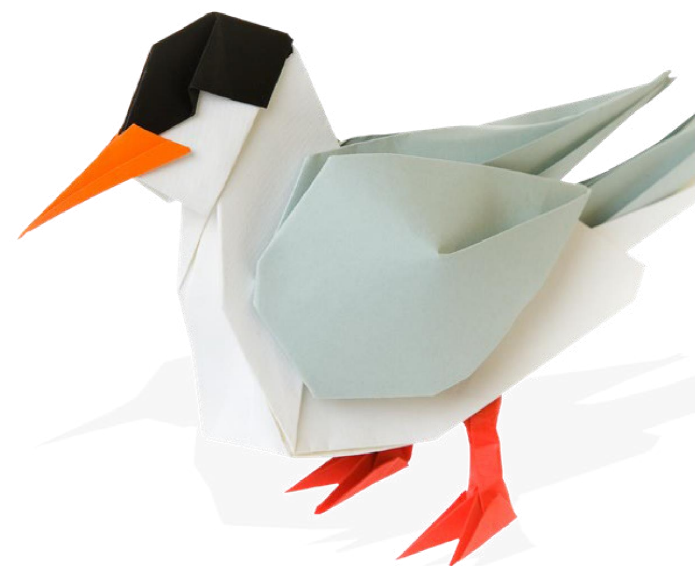
Ethical considerations, accuracy and precision

- There is a clear statement about ethical considerations on page 24 although it was rather generic. There is also a risk assessment on page 23, but this is not a requirement of the mark scheme.
- The data is thought to be accurate as the property quality survey would accurately detail the impact of students.
- The data can be thought of as precise as the decibel reading will give quantitative readings on page 18.

Best Fit – Level 3, 9 marks

- A broad range of relevant data was collected, and the candidate describes why this was collected, and links it specifically to the different Enquiry Questions.
- This NEA was chosen as the focus of this training partly because it is clearly an individual piece of work and also because the fieldwork techniques used are easily replicated by individual students such as the decibel meter which can be downloaded on a free app as well as straightforward bi-polar surveys which are specifically for their project and not simply downloaded from the internet.
- The spatial sampling system could have been more fully developed. In addition, there may be too many types of data collected which may have made the subsequent synthesis of this data collection programme challenging.
- As a result, using the best fit technique it was awarded Level 3 and 9 marks.

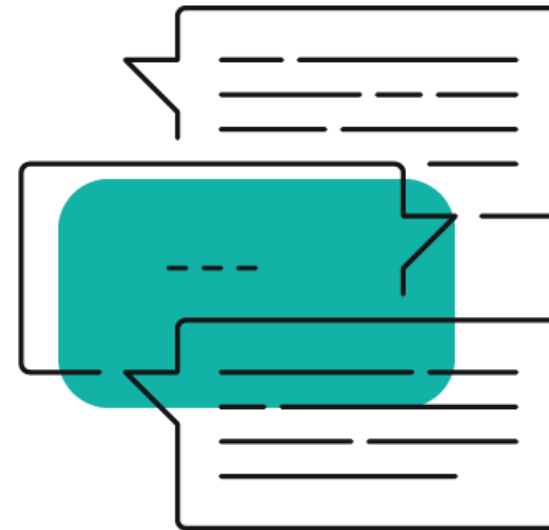
Part 3 – Data Representation, Analysis, Interpretation and Evaluation (NEA pp 26–54)



Delegate poll 5

What level do you think the 'Data Representation, Analysis, Interpretation and Evaluation' section is?

- Level 1
- Level 2
- Level 3
- Level 4



Data Representation, Analysis, Interpretation and Evaluation of Techniques and Methodologies used – 24 marks

Level	Mark	Descriptor
Level 3	13–18	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Uses appropriate geographical skills to deconstruct data in order to show partially evidenced connections and mostly accurate statistical/geographical significance of data. (AO3)• Provides a generally balanced appraisal, that may lack detail in some aspects of techniques and methodologies used including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ ethical dimensions of field research◦ utility and validity of chosen methodologies. (AO3)• Synthesises research findings coherently to form rational conclusions that are mostly supported by evidence. (AO3)• Communicates conclusions that are supported by mostly relevant fieldwork data or information presented in a manner which is appropriate and mostly technically accurate. (AO3)

Criteria

- Uses appropriate geographical skills to deconstruct data in order to show partially evidenced connections and mostly accurate statistical/geographical significance of data.
- Provides a generally balanced appraisal of techniques and methodologies used including:
 - ethical dimensions of field research
 - utility and validity of chosen methodologies.

Deconstruction of data

- The Investigation shows use of appropriate geographical skills:
 - Radar diagrams on pages 27 and 28
 - Bar charts on pages 26
 - Land use map page 35.
- The candidate uses Student t tests on pages 49–51.
- There is an appraisal of the techniques used on page 58 in the conclusion section.

Criteria

- Synthesises research findings coherently to form rational evidence-based conclusions.
- Communicates convincing conclusions that are supported by the clear and technically accurate presentation of relevant fieldwork data or information.

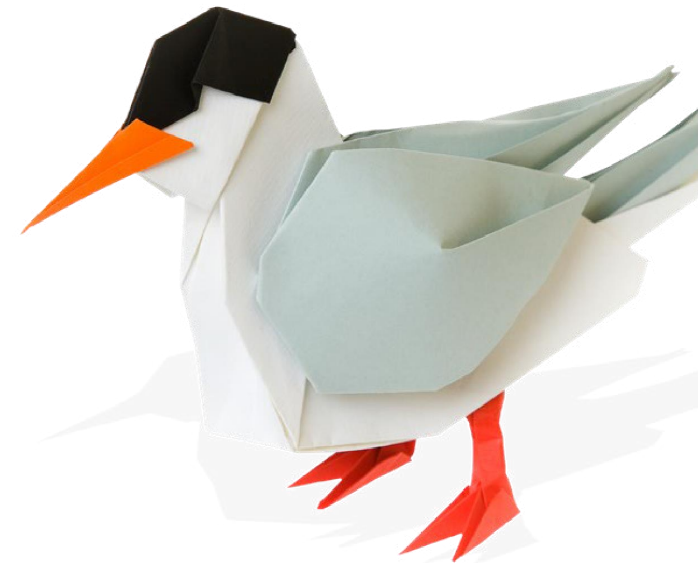
Synthesises research findings and comes to conclusions

- This is perhaps the weakest part of the Data Representation, Analysis, Interpretation and Evaluation of Techniques and Methodologies used section. The student has very good analysis skills and puts forward suitable explanations for all of the evidence presented, with links to theory. There are very brief concluding statements but there is little synthesis of the results either within or between the key questions.
- The investigation could have been improved by annotating the photographs and perhaps having 4 per page as opposed to the large full page photographs. It could also have been improved if there had been more synthesis of the data collected both within and between the Key Questions. For instance, the student could have explored the links between the results of the noise survey and the property survey as well as the links between the property survey and the housing tenure.
- Crucially, it needed a conflict matrix at the end of the section so that this analysis naturally leads onto answering the title of the NEA which was on assessing the conflicts caused by studentification.

Best Fit – Level 4, 20 marks

- This section is less strong than the others, and it would have been better if there had been greater synthesis of the results. It appears that the student has already determined that the two areas were fundamentally different. This meant that instead of, say, comparing the decibel counts to the environmental quality or anti-social behaviour, they took this for granted and instead sought to only explain the results of the data they had collected.
- The explanations were clear and well linked to theory but for top band marks it is expected that students go beyond explanation and analysis and synthesise their results.
- As a result, despite the strong analysis and the meeting of the other criteria it was felt that this was Level 4, 20 marks.

Part 4 – Conclusions and Critical Evaluation of the Overall Investigation (NEA pp 55–58)



Delegate poll 6

What level do you think the 'Conclusions and Critical Evaluation of the Overall Investigation' is?

- Level 1
- Level 2
- Level 3
- Level 4



Conclusions and Critical Evaluation of the Overall Investigation

24 marks

Level 3	13–18	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrates mostly accurate and relevant geographical knowledge and understanding of location, geographical theory and comparative context. (AO1)• Applies understanding to find largely coherent and relevant links between the investigation's conclusions and a broader geographical context. (AO2)• Synthesises most aspects of the research findings in a largely coherent manner. (AO3)• Provides a mainly appropriate appraisal of the reliability of evidence and validity of conclusions. (AO3)• A developed argument which considers a relevant selection of factors in an uneven manner and which is expressed through logical lines of reasoning that are clear, but not fully developed and demonstrates a use of an appropriately structured enquiry process. Uses mostly accurate geographical terminology.(AO3)• Conclusions are mostly supported by drawing together a selection of mostly relevant evidence and concepts linked to the investigation. (AO3)
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Criteria

Demonstrates mostly accurate and relevant geographical knowledge and understanding of location, geographical theory and comparative context.

Applies understanding to find largely coherent and relevant links between the investigation's conclusions and a broader geographical context.

Synthesises most aspects of the research findings.

Relevant geographical knowledge of location, geographical theory and comparative context

- There is some relevant geographical knowledge such as the link between students and antisocial crime on page 56 as well as the positive and negative impacts of students, also on page 56.
- There is comparative context when the student returns to the impacts in Leeds on page 57.
- There is good geographical knowledge about the location shown throughout, particularly with the census information in the 'analysis' section, highlighting that evidence for criteria can be found anywhere.
- As with the preceding section, there is little synthesis of the results, and the study would have been improved if there had been an assessment of which were the most significant conflicts, as suggested by their title.

Criteria

- Conclusions are mostly supported by drawing together a selection of mostly relevant evidence and concepts linked to the investigation
- Provides a mainly appropriate appraisal of the reliability of evidence and validity of conclusions.
- A developed argument which considers a relevant selection of factors in an uneven manner and which is expressed through logical lines of reasoning that are clear, but not fully developed and demonstrates a use of an appropriately structured enquiry process. Uses mostly accurate geographical terminology

Appraisal of techniques and methodologies

- There is appraisal of the reliability of each type of data collected on page 58, as well as the effect this has on the validity of the conclusions drawn.
- There are sound conclusions, but the study would have been improved if an overall conclusion had been made outlining the extent to which there are conflicts caused by studentification, as well as which of these conflicts was the most important.

Best Fit – Level 3, 18 marks

- Overall, there are sound conclusions made in this section which are drawn from the preceding section. There is also a clear appraisal of the reliability and validity of the conclusions drawn.
- Yet there was little synthesis and only a limited overall conclusion made.
- Using the best fit approach this section was placed in Level 3 and was awarded 18 marks.

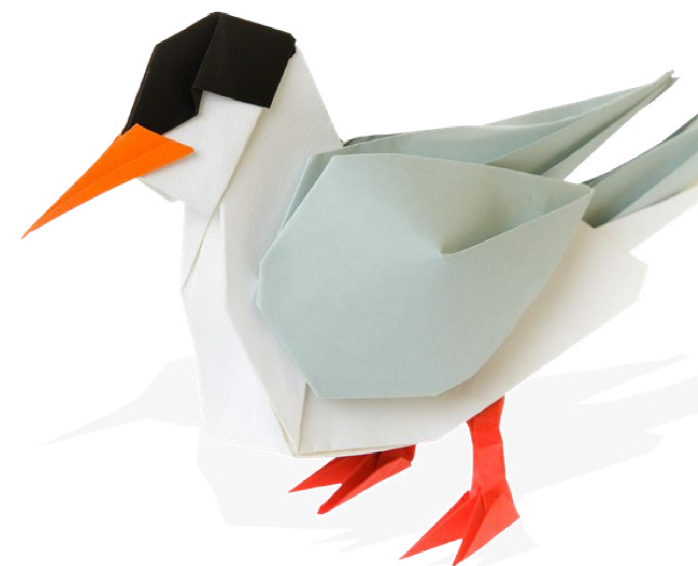
Overall marks for this NEA

- Purpose – 10 marks
- Methodology – 9 marks
- Data presentation and analysis – 20 marks
- Conclusion and evaluation – 18 marks
- **Total 57 marks** (between an A and A*)
- This not a perfect piece of work. In places it is quite wordy (total = c.7600 words) and the student may have benefitted a reminder that each section is worth different marks and that the analysis and the conclusion section should be longer than both the Introduction and the Data collection programme sections
- The analysis and, in particular, the conclusion sections could have also been improved if there were more synthesis of the results, as well as an overall assessment. Yet it is clearly an individual piece of work requiring only basic fieldwork equipment, and so this type of study where a student designs their own data collection sheet and finds some theoretical basis for their work is to be commended.

Frequently asked questions

- We are covering the most frequently asked questions about coursework delivery and marking.
- You can also post questions in the Group Chat after this section and we will have time at the end to respond to these questions.

FAQs: data collection and analysis



FAQs: Data collection (1)

What happens to students who miss the teacher-led fieldwork?

Fieldwork statement

- If there are exceptional circumstances for student not fulfilling the 4 days' fieldwork requirement and they've had to change to complete it, it's fine to sign the Fieldwork Statement and upload by 15 May.
- No other info is required because as of 2024 the declaration says: *"I confirm that the fieldwork occasions recorded above have been carried out [...] and that all candidates [...] have **had the opportunity** to attend."*

Completing the NEA

- They would still need to complete the NEA (or lose access to 20% of marks)
- They need to use some primary data (student-collected data), perhaps in the local environment (remember the NEA can be focused on any part of the spec content and local context).
- They would need to be taught some fieldwork skills (maybe some classroom-based/teacher-supported fieldwork skills), followed by independent data collection.
- Some of this needs to be first hand but some of it could be collected remotely and depending on the focus of the investigation they can also rely more heavily on secondary data.

FAQs: Data collection (2)

A level field work and the fieldwork statement - do I have to run 4 days of fieldwork?

- Independent student-led fieldwork can make up some, but not all, of the 4 days.
- We just need the Head teacher to confirm that all students have had the opportunity to do 4 days of fieldwork (that covers both physical and human processes) and whether that is *teacher*-led or *student*-led, it just needs to be fit for purpose and within the permitted guidance.
- However, some teacher-led fieldwork is required to give student the knowledge, understanding and skills of fieldwork practice so they can do independent fieldwork for their NEA/Coursework investigation.

FAQs: Data collection (3)

How many data collection methods do my students need to include to access the top level in the mark scheme?

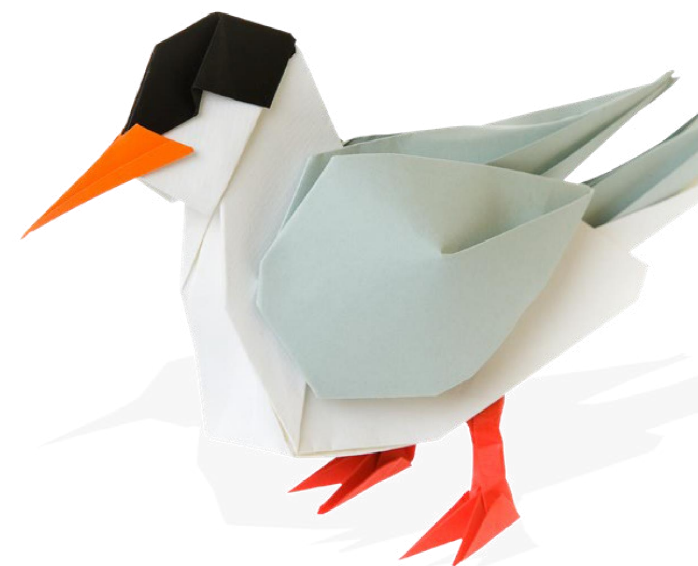
- There is no set number of primary techniques that have to be used. Instead, sufficient data must be collected for the student to conduct a valid analysis and draw conclusions, which obviously depends upon the overall research plan.
- Data can include quantitative and/or qualitative data – it does not have to be numerical.
- So 3 or 4, or possibly 5 at the most.
- Secondary is slightly different as maps are essential for the Purpose, and some use secondary sources to help focus what they are going to be investigating (so that goes into the Purpose too). Then they may want to consult further secondary sources to help support or interpret their primary data which might then go into the Analysis. And, of course, they can evaluate their secondary sources in the final section as well their primary data collection. There is therefore no maximum number of secondary sources.

FAQs: Analysis

Do they need to include a statistical test?

- Students do **not** have to have a statistical test. They do, however, have to show appropriate geographical skills to deconstruct data in order to show evidenced connections and accurate statistical/geographical significance of data.
- Some of the best NEA have hypothesis testing at their heart and so the likelihood of a statistical test in such an NEA is quite high.

FAQs: titles and the proposal form



FAQs: Titles

My students' titles are all quite similar – will the moderator penalise our centre for this?

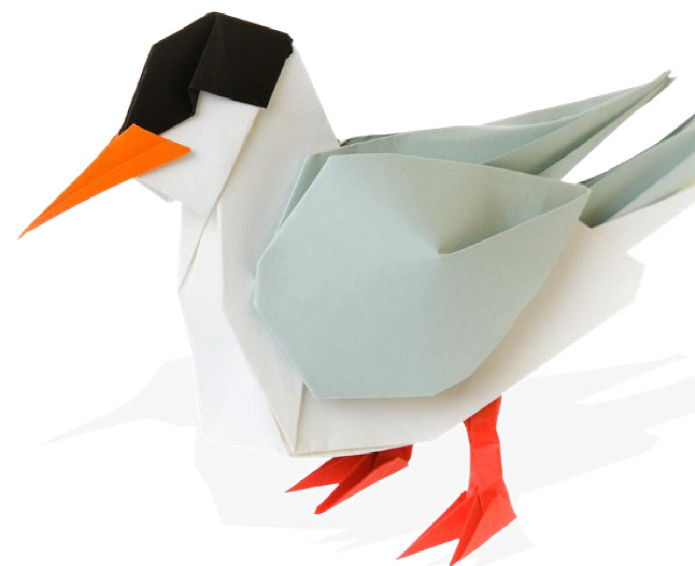
- The moderator will not penalise the centre. It is the centre's responsibility to ensure there is no plagiarism.
- It is good practice to give the students the freedom to explore their own ideas and interests. However, in large centres it is likely that the titles might be quite similar.
Only if the moderator has concerns over plagiarism will the similarities of titles be an issue.
- Instead, the **differentiation** between the students will become apparent in:
 - the selection of the range of sources,
 - the comparative context and broader geographical considerations in the introduction,
 - the use and selection of secondary data in the fieldwork section,
 - the quality of the analysis, synthesis, evaluation and conclusions drawn in the final two sections.

FAQs: Word count

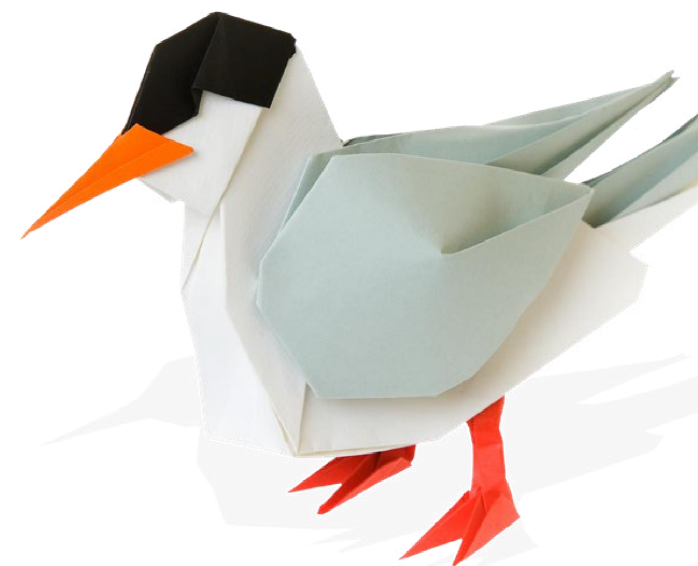
Some of my students are writing 10,000+ words. Should I penalise them for overlong work?

- No, the 4000 words is a *guide* not a *limit* and you must use the assessment criteria only, and there is nothing in there about number of words.
- There are, however, references to 'relevance' and 'coherence' and 'concise' in a number of elements which may / may not be present in overlong work.

Plenary and answers to questions from the chat

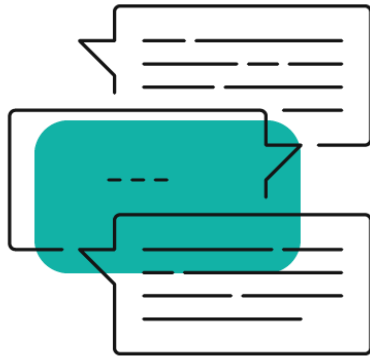


Where can I get further support?



Subject Advisor Support

Our subject advisors are experts in their fields and are here to support you throughout the year.

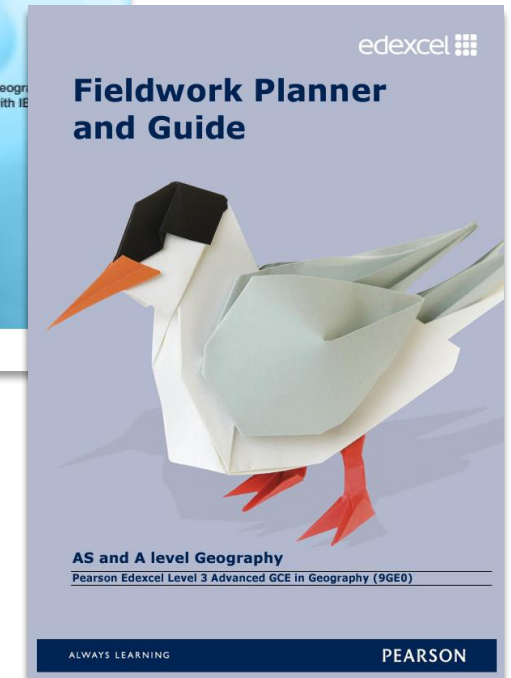
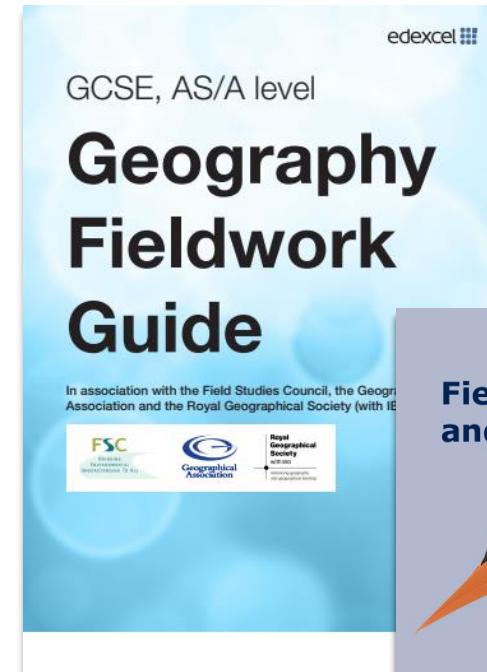


Find the Subject Advisor for your area [here](#) and sign up to receive regular updates from your Subject Advisor on qualification news and support for your subject [here](#).



Fieldwork and the Independent Investigation

- AS and A Level Geography [Fieldwork Planner and Guide](#)
- GCSE, AS and A Level Geography fieldwork [guidance](#) with the Field Studies Council
- [Guide](#) to developing titles and completing the proposal form
- The independent investigation and the written report [FAQs](#)
- Non-examined assessment (NEA) [exemplar packs](#)
- AS and A Level Geography [Maths for Geographers guide](#)



Assessment Services

- Previous exam questions can be used to build your own exam papers [here](#).
- Analysis of the performance of your own centre's exam scores can be obtained [here](#).
- [Access to Scripts](#) allows you to view your candidates' marked scripts (but only until 13 December).

The logo for examWizard features the word "exam" in white lowercase letters, followed by "W" in white uppercase letters with a black star above it, and "izard" in white lowercase letters. The entire logo is set against a solid blue rectangular background.

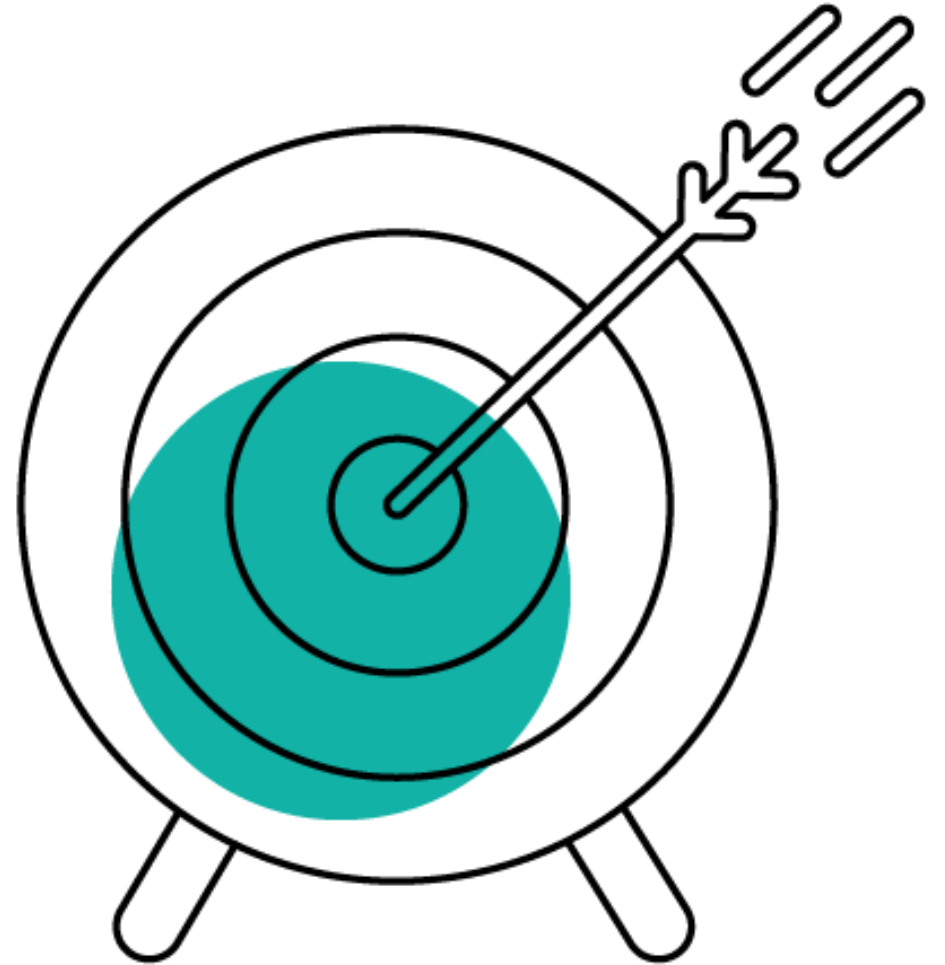
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The logo for ResultsPlus features the word "Results" in orange lowercase letters, followed by "P" in a dark blue, textured, stylized font, and "lus" in dark blue lowercase letters. The entire logo is set against a white rectangular background.

ResultsPlus

In this session we looked at

- the marks awarded to a NEA exemplar
- how the work met the criteria in the mark scheme and therefore why it was awarded these marks.
- answering frequently asked questions.



Find out more

For more professional development courses please see Pearson's [Professional Development Academy](#)





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