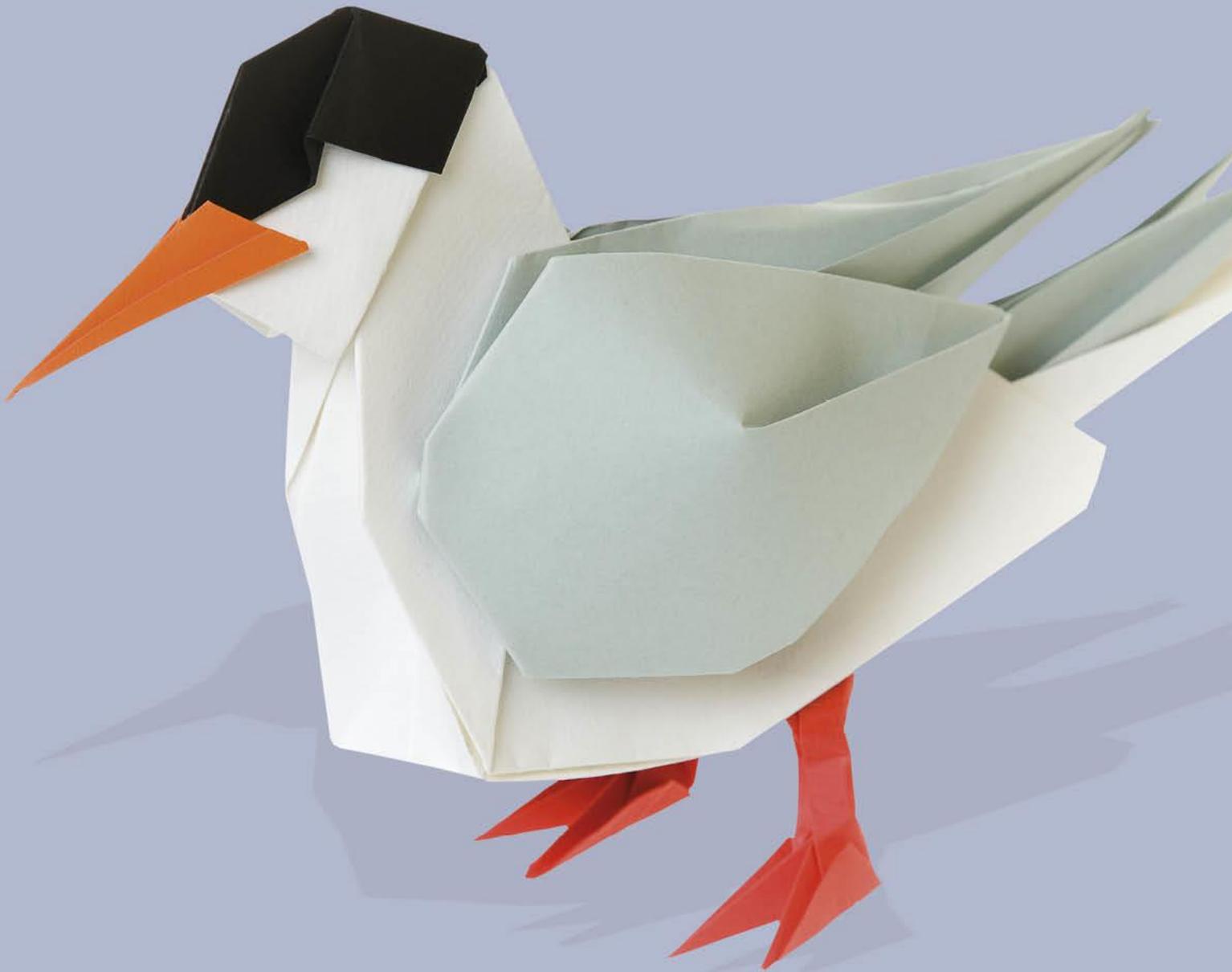


# Non-examined assessment: Exemplar 1 – examiner commentary



**A Level Geography**

**Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in Geography (9GE0)**

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# Non-examined assessment: Exemplar 1

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## Candidate Title

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An investigation into the differences between beaches exposed to contrasting wave energies

## Summary of marks

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<b>Purpose of the independent investigation</b>	Secure level 3
<b>Field methodologies and data collection</b>	Low level 3
<b>Data representation, analysis, interpretation and evaluation of techniques and methodologies used</b>	Level 4
<b>Conclusions and critical evaluation of the overall investigation</b>	High level 3

## Examiner commentary

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### Purpose of the independent investigation

It was thought that this write up was **secure** in level 3. This was because:

*Demonstrates accurate and relevant geographical knowledge and understanding of location, geographical theory and comparative context throughout (AO1).*

It is important to realise that this criteria is encouraging the candidates to demonstrate their relevant geographical knowledge throughout the write up and not just in the introduction. The student has demonstrated this throughout the write up such as page 1, page 17 and page 20. There is clear understanding shown in the explanations of the factors affecting beach profiles. It is important to consider that the configuration of the beach is not factored in. The wave refraction will be very different given the very different map forms of these two beaches. The much more open profile of Vazon, which is substantially larger and the smaller more constricted form of Fermain will inevitably affect wave height and therefore profiles. It is not necessary for the student to investigate the effect of wave refraction, but they should evaluate this as a limitation in the last section of the write up.

*Applies understanding to find coherent and relevant links between the investigation's context and a broader geographical context (AO2).*

This can be achieved in a variety of ways – as with the previous criteria it does not have to be in the section titled 'introduction'. In this case the student relates it to other factors on page 20 as well as relating it to broad ideas of meteorological conditions on page 3. As with the issue concerning wave refraction it would have been very useful to know if either if these beaches are managed and the possible effect that this would have had on the results gained.

*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).*

This criteria will always be dependent on the individual title. It is important to remember that a **broad** range has also to be **manageable**. In this case there is some reference to text books (page 21) and nice use of an exposure rating. The write up might have been improved by referencing the authors in the text and perhaps using some 'classic' text books such as Pethick. The student could also investigated the effects of wave refraction as well as human influence and could have referenced the Shoreline Management Plan.

### Field methodologies and data collection

It was thought that this write up was **likely** to be awarded **low** level 3. This was because:

## Non-examined assessment: Exemplar 1

*Chooses appropriate methods to collect a range of data and information relevant to the geographical topic (AO3).*

The student used appropriate methods such as beach gradients p9 beach width page 8 sediment size page 9. As with all of the criteria, data can be discussed **anywhere** in the write up. In this case credit can be given for the exposure scale on page 4.

*Designs a valid sampling framework explicitly linked and appropriate to the geographical focus being investigated (AO3). Considers both frequency and timing of observations (AO3).*

Spatial sampling was discussed on page 7 and there was implicit understanding of the timing of this (tide times) on page 7. It would have been better if the student had considered more on how temporal factors would affect the results – a shame as the candidate clearly understood that it would in the introduction on page 1 where winter and summer beaches were discussed. It would also be very useful if the student offered some **justification** for this choice – even a health and safety spin would be useful here.

*Research planning shows appropriate and relevant understanding of the ethical dimensions of field research methods (AO3).*

For the purposes of this exercise this criteria was disregarded as it was not applicable when this a level write up was written

*Obtains reliable data and information as a result of consistent use of methods with high levels of accuracy/precision (AO3).*

The use of the sieves page 10 was one element of the student's data being considered to be precise. It is important to remember that not **every** word of all the criteria have to be satisfied for the level to be awarded.

### **Data representation, analysis, interpretation and evaluation of techniques and methodologies used**

It was thought that this write up was **probably** in level 4. This was because:

*Uses appropriate geographical skills to deconstruct data in order to show evidenced connections and accurate statistical/geographical significance of data (AO3).*

There is evidence of a range of geographical skills such as cross sections on page 12, bar charts on page 14 and scatterplots on page 18. There was also the use of accurate statistical techniques and the significance of the data on page 19.

*Provides detailed and balanced appraisal of techniques and methodologies used including:*

- *ethical dimensions of field research*
- *utility and validity of chosen methodologies (AO3).*

In this case it is probably better to consider that **appraisal** is a form of **evaluation**. As with all the criteria evidence can be found throughout the write up – in this case there is an appraisal on pages 20 and 21.

*Synthesises research findings coherently to form rational evidence based conclusions (AO3).*

*Communicates convincing conclusions that are supported by the clear and technically accurate presentation of relevant fieldwork data or information (AO3).*

The student has a good discussion of the results on page 17 - 19 with good links to theory and particularly technical language.

### **Conclusions and critical evaluation of the overall investigation**

It was thought that this write up was very **secure** in level 3 and if the student had appraised the reliability of the data would be considered for level 4. This was because:

*Demonstrates mostly accurate and relevant geographical knowledge and understanding of location, geographical theory and comparative context throughout (AO1).*

Again the key word is throughout and not just in a section titled conclusion. This was shown throughout the write up.

*Applies understanding to find largely coherent and relevant links between the investigation's conclusions and a broader geographical context (AO2).*

The broader geographical context was widening the write up out to other factors as discussed on page 20.

*Synthesises most aspects of the research findings coherently and comprehensively (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).*

There is a sound developed argument through the explanation of results as well as the evaluation of the write up on pages 17-21. There is good use of accurate geographical terminology.

*Conclusions are mostly supported by drawing together a selection of mostly relevant evidence and concepts linked to the investigation (AO3).*

The student does make conclusions page 17 but could have benefitted from the conclusions being stated and supported by key pieces of data from the write up.