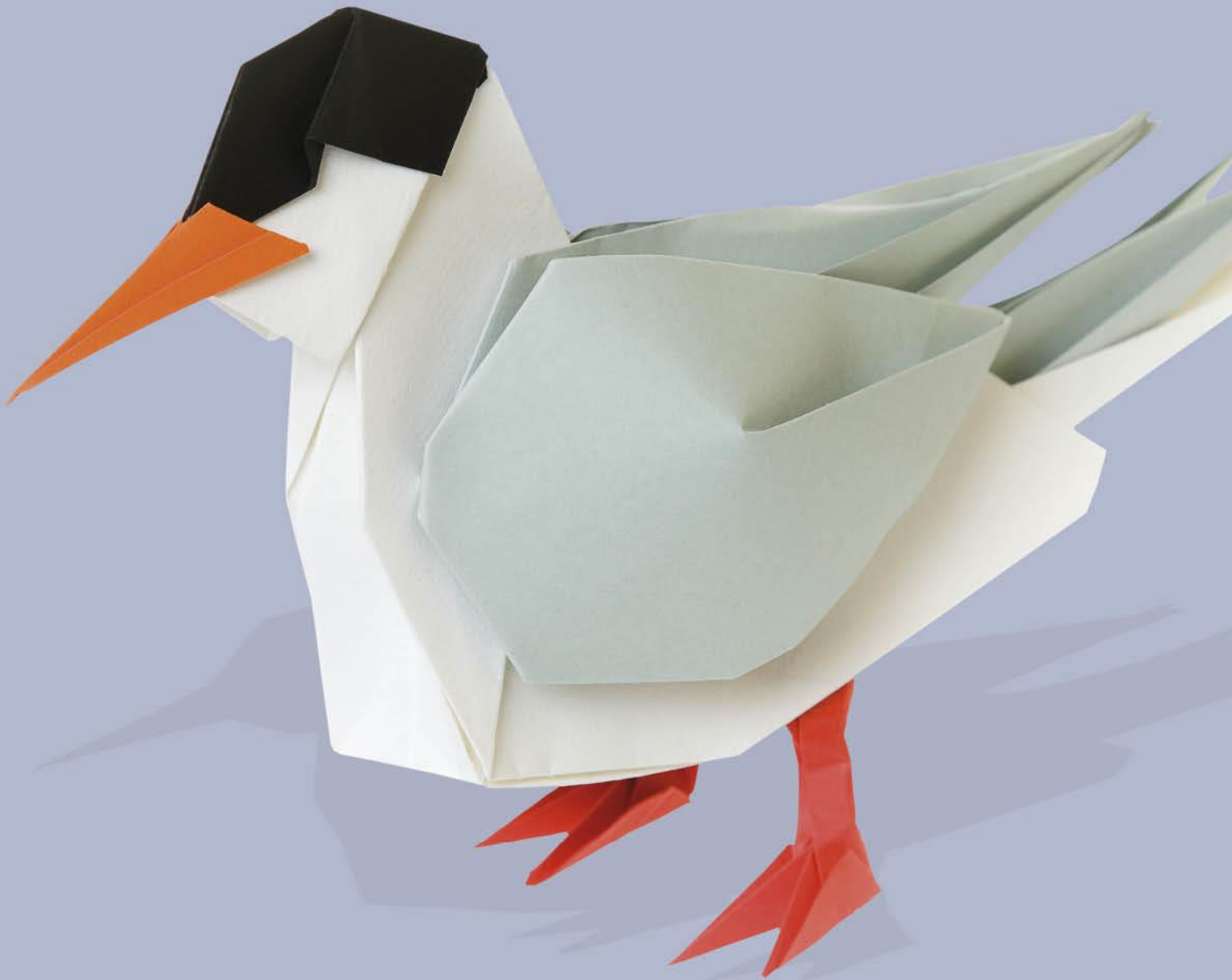


Non-examined assessment: Exemplar 3 – examiner commentary



A Level Geography

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

Non-examined assessment: Exemplar 3

Contents

Candidate Title	1
Summary of marks	1
Examiner commentary	2

Candidate Title

An investigation into the processes of primary vegetation succession in a coastal sand dune belt

Summary of marks

Purpose of the independent investigation	Secure level 2
Field methodologies and data collection	Low level 2
Data representation, analysis, interpretation and evaluation of techniques and methodologies used	Low level 3
Conclusions and critical evaluation of the overall investigation	Low level 3

Examiner commentary

Purpose of the investigation

It was thought that this write up was **secure** in level 2. This was because: *Demonstrates geographical knowledge and understanding of location, geographical theory and comparative context which is relevant but narrow or incomplete, and may include some inaccuracies (AO1).*

There is reference to theory throughout the write up but some of it is not relevant nor particularly accurate such as the sediment sink diagram on page 1.

Applies understanding to find links between the investigation's context and a broader geographical context; links are mainly relevant and coherent but may include some inaccuracies (AO2).

There are tentative links with implicit impact of humans discussed in the explanation of results (explanation of blow outs page 20) and discussion of temporal aspects of sand dune development on page 23. It is important to note that the three hypotheses are very 'routine' – it might have benefitted the student if they had spread out the transects and focussed on west – east variation along the beach. This would have allowed greater analysis and synthesis of the results gained.

Investigates a range of mainly relevant geographical sources in order to identify/obtain mainly accurate geographical information and data that supports most parts of the investigation; research information is used to construct a generally valid aim, question or hypothesis that provides a mostly appropriate framework for investigation with some consideration of manageability and/or scale; planned enquiry process is adequately structured and clear (AO3).

There are a few sources cited in the bibliography (page 26) and there was evidence some personal research with green keepers on page 23.

Non-examined assessment: Exemplar 3

Field methodologies and data collection

It was thought that this write up was **low** level 2. This was because:
Chooses methods to collect data and information relevant to the geographical topic (AO3).

The main data was **primary with little secondary sources** but there is no stipulation that secondary data has to be collected – only that **primary data** is collected by the student. There were implicit secondary sources which were not cited when discussing tree rings on page 23.

A sampling framework is considered but may not be technically valid or successfully implemented (AO3).

Sampling was discussed on page 6 but there did not seem to be a rationale used to locate the 5 transects. Sampling was, however, discussed in terms of transects on page 8.

Consideration of either frequency or timing of observations (AO3).

There was little consideration of the frequency or timings of the observations apart from the frequency observations of 5 transects on page 6. The write up was undermined a little by the lack of wind data for the 5 transects (page 8) and the student could have improved their write up by having a temporal strategy in place to measure wind speeds over the transect.

Data and information collected using methods with inconsistent accuracy/precision (AO3).

The data collection was thought to be mainly accurate and precise but satisfying this criteria alone is not enough to raise the work to level 3.

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

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

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

There were dune transects on page 10, pie charts on page 11, divided bar charts on page 15, and line graphs on page 17 with only basic statistical analysis (%).

Provides a generally balanced appraisal, that may lack detail in some aspects of techniques and methodologies used including:

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

There is an appraisal of the techniques and methodologies on page 25 but this lacks detail.

Synthesises research findings coherently to form rational conclusions that are mostly supported by evidence (AO3).

There is synthesis of the results page 19-24 that does lead to rational conclusions with good understanding of the process of sand dune succession.

Communicates conclusions that are supported by mostly relevant fieldwork data or information presented in a manner which is appropriate and mostly technically accurate. (AO3)

Conclusions are briefly stated page 25 but could have been better supported by the use of fieldwork data.

Conclusions and critical evaluation of the overall investigation

It was thought that this write up was **low** level 3. 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 where the processes of sand dune succession are fully discussed.

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

The broader geographical context is limited and the student could have widened out the study to investigate the impact of people sand dune succession – this again could have been averted when the original proposal was submitted.

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 page 25 and there is good use of accurate geographical terminology. There is, however, little discussion of the reliability of the data – since all the hypotheses are, unsurprisingly, confirmed there isn't any reflection on any possible weaknesses.

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 25 but could have benefitted from the conclusions being stated and supported by key pieces of data from the write up.