

Examiners' Report/ Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2011

Applied GCE

GCE in Travel & Tourism (6989)
Unit 3: Destination Europe

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Introduction

This is the eleventh series where there have been entries for this unit. Reports for each series are available on the Edexcel website www.edexcel.com. Centres can access Reports from each of the past series (January and June) and find suggestions on how weaknesses can be overcome, including classroom activities designed to improve performance.

Centres that have been moderated will also find moderator reports available within their centres. Centres are strongly advised to access their individual reports as these offer specific guidance on the accuracy of marking.

The contents of this report:

- Changes observed over the previous series
- Improving performance
- For each Task A (AO1) - Task B (AO2) - Task C (AO3) - Task D (AO4) -
 - a. Assessment evidence requirements
 - b. Candidate performance
 - c. Improvements, common weaknesses, good practice
- Accuracy of the marking and the administration

Changes observed over the previous series

As seen in June 2010, the majority of work submitted continues to be, in the main, well organised and the assessment evidence generally easy to find. Work was accompanied by appropriate supporting documentation including mark record sheets, assessor feedback sheets and authentication statements.

More detailed and appropriate annotation was also present on many samples. It was good to see there is more emphasis on quality than quantity. Candidates are clearly focused on the set tasks and submitting only the material that meets assessment criteria.

It was also pleasing to see evidence in candidates' work showing that some centres had acted upon feedback given either through the moderator's reports to centres or from the Principal Moderator's report for previous series. For instance use of subheadings to structure assessments in task (d) and reference to appeal in task (c).

Whilst research evidence is now included by many candidates, in this series evidence of research was disappointing. For the majority, evidence of research was limited to just one source, the Internet. On the whole, very little referencing was seen, with the odd exception where there was in fact referencing within the body of the text which is recommended for consideration of higher marks. Past reports give guidance on techniques that can be used to help candidates to use more than one source for their research, in particular for task a).

It was disappointing to see that many candidates continue to struggle with task b). The main reason for a comparative under-achievement in this task would seem to be that the task requirements are not being fully met.

For many, the starting point of the task seemed to be the pen portrait rather than the appeal of the selected destination. This then meant that candidates approached this as one task not two. They tended to consider features in terms of the tourist in the pen portrait only. Whilst the choice of destination may be determined by the needs of the tourists, once the destination is chosen, the pen portrait should be put to one side. The first task is to research the key features that give the destination appeal to different types of customers. This information should form the first part of the task.

There was, however, more evidence this series that candidates are beginning to consider the appeal of the destination to different types of tourists.

Improving performance

Centres are strongly advised to obtain copies of Principal Moderator/Examiner Reports of previous series (www.edexcel.com) as these contain lots of suggestions for classroom activities and ideas to help improve candidate performance in each task.

Assessment evidence

The tasks for the unit are set within the specification. There are no requirements for how evidence of completing these tasks is presented except that in task A maps are required. There are four tasks for the unit as shown on page 36 of the specification. Each task targets one of the Assessment Objectives (AOs) for the qualification. These AOs are given on page 166 of the specification.

Unit 3: Destination Europe

Task (a)

Assessment Evidence Requirements

This task targets Assessment Objective 1 (AO1): the candidate's knowledge and understanding.

It is in 3 parts:

- **Six maps, one for each category of destination** (listed on p33 of the specification). Each map should locate the appropriate European travel destinations popular with UK tourists and highlight the relevant gateways, road and rail routes from the UK.
- For each category of destination, an **explanation of the features** that differentiate them with examples.
- An **explanation of the difficulties** in categorising some destinations, with examples.

AO1 - The evidence expected for this task would therefore be:

1. Six maps - one for each type of destination.
2. Destinations to be located are those that are 'key' i.e. most popular. For instance the 'Top 10 City Break Destinations'. Candidates should discriminate between all possible destinations in a category and those that are 'key'.
3. If 'symbols' are used they should be an appropriate size in relation to the scale of the map. For instance a small, discreet dot could be used for all categories, except 'areas' which should be shown as a defined area.
4. **The most appropriate transport route/s and gateways** used by UK tourists to reach each destination located. Maps do not need to show ALL possible routes and gateways. Candidates should demonstrate that they understand how tourists access each destination by only showing the routes and gateways appropriate to the category. The transport method tourists use to access coastal areas will not be the same as for countryside areas. UK gateways and those in Europe should be labelled as should road/rail routes.
5. Emerging destinations, if shown, should be clearly highlighted to show that they have recently become popular.
6. Other detail shown should be relevant to the category of destination; for instance for 'coastal areas' it could be expected that the seas and oceans are labelled; that air travel would be most appropriate to access many coastal destinations and so airports located would be named in full.
7. An explanation of how features are used to differentiate categories. The features are listed on page 34 of the specification in topic 3.2. Candidates would not be expected to refer to all types of features for each category as some will not be important. For example in countryside areas, landscape could be considered the most important feature in categorising the type of destination. In their explanation examples of landscapes in the countryside destinations located will be used to support explanations.
8. The evidence for each category will demonstrate that candidates have identified the features that differentiate destinations selected and that they understand that all destinations placed in that category share common

features. For instance at the simplest level that all coastal areas share a common landscape feature of being on the coast.

9. An explanation of the difficulties of using features to categorise destinations.
10. Clear reference to features and examples of specific features in specific destinations to support explanations

AO1 - Candidate Performance

Improvements seen this series:

- Fewer candidates included too many destinations and there was more evidence to suggest the 'Top 10' had been researched and selected.
- Marks awarded are now more frequently at mark band 2.
- More attempts to show access and transport routes to each destination located on maps, albeit still a minority.
- Labelling **relevant** routes and gateways rather than all possible routes.
- More detail on maps - such as airport names.
- Fewer candidates describing the features of destinations, more explanations of categorisation.
- Greater use of examples of features and destinations to inform and support explanations.
- Majority of candidates included an explanation of the difficulties in categorising destinations. Examples of overlaps and destinations that could belong in more than one category were given.

AO1 - The common weaknesses hindering achievement:

- Maps that show 'obscure' destinations rather than the most popular.
- The location of countryside areas on maps. They are either vague, inaccurate or else mountain ranges and not appropriate.
- Some candidates are still including too many destinations leading to indecipherable maps and complex keys.
- Maps without labels that rely upon complicated numbering/alphabetical codes and keys with place names and labels on separate sheets.
- Maps showing European rail and road networks without labels; where access to destinations and relevance of transport method has not been considered. As in the last series, candidates are still unnecessarily showing all possible transport routes for each destination category. They should choose the most appropriate transport methods and relevant gateways for each category.
- Where separate maps of UK networks and gateways are included, they do not show how to access destinations located.
- Maps that show UK gateways but European gateways are not shown.
- Explanations do not always relate to the features as given in the unit specification.
- Detailed descriptions of destinations rather than explaining how features are used to categorise destinations.

- The lack the detail and reasoning (needed to access mark band 3) in the explanation of the difficulties found in the differentiation of categories, many were just one short paragraph.

AO1 - Good practice that helps achievement:

- Clear labels on the maps themselves- destination names, names of roads, airports etc. It is clear that some candidates plan the layout and labelling of their maps by researching destinations and routes first to decide on an appropriate size of map and labels.
- Where emerging destinations are underlined or given a different symbol linked to a key to show 'recently popular'.
- Examples are used to support explanations of difficulties with reference to specific features of the destinations that overlap.

Task (b)

Assessment Evidence Requirements

This task targets Assessment Objective 2 (AO2): the candidate's ability to apply their skills and understanding.

It is in 2 parts:

- A **description** of the **key** features that give the selected European travel destination **appeal** to different **types** of tourists.
- An **explanation** of how the recommended **destination** meets the needs of a tourist whose needs and circumstances are given to the candidate by the tutor in the form of a pen portrait.

The emphasis of this task is key features of destinations and their link to appeal. It assesses whether candidates can apply their knowledge of key features and appeal to one destination and whether they can make recommendations to show that the destination is suitable in meeting tourists' needs. The candidates should be provided with a pen portrait that offers opportunities to consider complex as well as straightforward needs and circumstances.

A destination, not an island or country, should be chosen, this should belong to one of the categories of destinations used in task (a).

Candidates should research the features of their selected destination. They need to discriminate between features that exist and those that contribute to appeal. They need to concentrate on these 'key' features (i.e. those that contribute to appeal).

AO2- The evidence for this task would therefore:

1. Be submitted as two quite distinct parts

2. Identify the **key features** of the selected destination that contribute to appeal.
3. Describe the **key features** of the selected destination that contribute to appeal.
4. Make reference to the appeal of the selected destination and its key features to the **different types of tourists** as given in the unit specification on page 34. This should NOT relate to the tourists in the pen portrait.
5. Include a **separate** and clear explanation of how the destination and its features meet the needs of the tourists as outlined in the pen portrait.
6. Include **links between specific features** at the destination and tourists' needs.
7. Explain how, for the higher marks, complex needs have been met.

A02 - Candidate Performance

Improvements seen this series:

- Some candidates had considered the overall appeal to different types of tourists within their descriptions.
- An improvement was seen with the inclusion of pen portrait details in the majority of samples.

A02 - The common weaknesses hindering achievement:

- The description and explanation are merged - resulting in descriptions that lack detail and limited explanations.
- The appeal of features at the destination to different types of tourists is not considered in the description.
- There is too much emphasis on the pen portrait, which is only one aspect. Within the description reference to the pen portrait should not be given.
- Key features that contribute to appeal are not discriminated. Some describe all features in the selected destination rather than those that are 'key' in giving appeal.
- Many pen portraits still refer to recommending a holiday and evidence relates to the components of a holiday. For example - under the feature 'accommodation' they select suitable accommodation rather than considering the destination's provision of accommodation
- Complexity is not clearly addressed.

Features are given in the unit specification, see 3.2, p34.

Different types of tourists are suggested in the unit specification, see 3.3, p34. Examples of pen portraits with complex needs are found on p42 and p44.

A02 - Good practice that helps achievement:

- Including an introduction to the description in which the key features are identified with an indication of why other features do not contribute to the appeal of the destination. This makes it apparent that key features have been discriminated and higher mark bands could be considered.

- Evidence of understanding and application is shown most convincingly where there is less reliance on 'screen shots' and candidates use 'their own words'.

Task (c)

Assessment Evidence Requirements

This task targets Assessment Objective 3 (AO3): the candidate's ability to research and analyse.

The task is on 2 parts:

- Evidence of research undertaken for all tasks (a,b,c & d)
- An analysis of the factors that have led to the **growth** in popularity and appeal of one European travel destination including an analysis how the destination has controlled factors to maximise their appeal and popularity.

AO3 - The evidence expected for this task would therefore be:

1. Evidence of research for **all tasks** (a, b, c & d)
2. A bibliography for each task indicating the sources of information used for research
3. Referencing of sources used within the work submitted for *each* task.
4. The level of independent working; for higher marks evidence of independent research from the candidate endorsed by the assessor.
5. Evidence to show that a range of sources have been used e.g. maps, trade journals, newspaper articles, brochures and travel guides or from primary sources such as guest speakers/interviews. Details should be in the referencing of work as well as bibliographies.
6. A selected destination that belongs to one of the types given in the unit specification.
7. A selected destination that has recently become popular, for the higher mark bands to be considered.
8. An analysis of how each factor has contributed to the **growth** in the popularity and appeal of the destination (suggested factors can be found on p35 of the specification, 3.4).
9. Consideration of the factors that can be controlled by the destination itself to maximise popularity and appeal; for instance in terms of government and local authority planning, regeneration, reduced taxes, attracting inward investment, tourism planning, publicity, exhibitions and so on.
10. An analysis of what the destination has done to maximise its popularity and appeal.

AO3 - Candidate Performance

Improvements seen this series:

- Most candidates submitted a bibliography for at least one task.
- Most candidates focused on the factors affecting the growth in popularity and appeal as given in the specification.

- There was improvement in the analysis. Evidence was generally less disjointed 'cut and paste' submissions than in past series.
- Analytical skills were evidenced where candidates used 'their own words'.
- Fewer candidates chose countries rather than destinations.

AO3 - The common weaknesses hindering achievement:

- There continues to be an over-reliance on the Internet for research. Centres are reminded that lots of websites constitute one source of information and higher marks are not appropriate.
- Referencing tends to be found only in task (c) and is limited to identifying sources.
- Research is evidenced by many through bibliographies alone.
- Candidates do not provide sufficient evidence to show independent research.
- Evidence of independence often relies on a comment on the assessor feedback sheets. This is not appropriate if higher mark bands are to be considered; where independence should be made clear by the candidate.
- Some candidates do not analyse the 'growth' in the popularity and appeal and tend to explain or describe why the destination is popular.
- Many candidates provide a mainly superficial analysis of how the destination had controlled factors to maximise their popularity and appeal. Some are still incorrectly referring to Destination Management Companies, though this does seem to be less evident.
- Candidates tend to approach each factor in isolation. They tend not to consider the overall effect on the growth in popularity and appeal; or the relationships between factors and consequences.

In June 2006, moderators accepted a statement from the assessor that the candidate obtained sources independently, The Principal Moderator's reports since have stated that in the future, **evidence must be more detailed to access marks beyond the mid/entry point of mark band 2.** This could be a detailed statement from the candidate endorsed by the assessor that indicates how the sources were obtained and what help, if any, was provided to confirm that research was conducted independently.

It is not expected that candidates use the Harvard referencing system precisely although some similar format with detail would be expected.

AO3 - Good practice that helps achievement:

- Bibliographies that are detailed, showing date of research and usefulness.
- Candidates that include referencing within the body of the text itself rather than just stating a source.
- Use of a footnote system to show referencing.
- Evidence that shows independent research - research logs and statements.

- Referencing that clearly gives details of different sources being accessed, not just the Internet.
- Where there is a structure to the analysis with an introduction and conclusion.
- The analysis of controllable factors is presented under a separate heading.
- A useful technique is to identify the factors that are controllable and use this as the starting point for the analysis.

Task (d)

(Quality of Written Communication is assessed in this task.)

Assessment Evidence Requirements

This task targets Assessment Objective 4 (AO4): the candidate's ability to evaluate, draw reasoned conclusions and make justified recommendations.

There is only one element:

An assessment of the suitability of different modes of transport to *ONE* European travel destination for a tourist whose needs and circumstances have been given to the candidate in the form of a pen portrait. This will include details of their departure point and destination.

A04 - The evidence expected for this task should therefore:

1. Assess different modes of transport against the factors outlined on p35 in topic 3.3 of the specification.
2. Relate to how a tourist gets from a departure point to a destination.
3. Consider the entire journey from the tourists' home to the departure point gateway and also from the arrival point to the actual destination.
4. Relate to the needs of the tourist as outlined in the pen portrait.
5. Consider for suitability all modes of transport against different factors such as overall journey time, costs, safety, convenience, security etc. Each factor should be matched against the tourists' needs.
6. Assess **all** modes of transport even when it may be clear that some will not be suitable.
7. Give reasons for any unsuitability in terms of transport modes considered.
8. Make recommendations for one mode of transport that is justified in terms of 'the extent to which' the factors considered meet the tourists' needs.

A04 - Candidate Performance

This task is possibly the most successfully completed of all and many candidates continue to achieve mark band 2 and mark band 3 marks.

Improvements seen this series:

- Work was more evaluative than descriptive.

- Fewer candidates gave descriptions of routes
- Details of pen portraits were often included with samples and departure points were usually given.
- There was an improvement in that most pen portraits offered complex needs and circumstances with destinations that had some difficulty in access.

AO4- The common weaknesses hindering achievement:

- Lists of 'advantages and disadvantages' for each transport option. This is not appropriate for an evaluation
- Many candidates still did not consider suitability in meeting needs against a range of factors but focused only on costs and time.
- Reference to 'factors' was not always clear.
- Recommendations of where to stay, descriptions of hotels. This is completely irrelevant to this task and should not be included.
- **Unsuitable pen portraits**, for example complicated journeys rather than complex needs

Please note that centres often use the examples given in the specification guidance (page 45 Assessment Guidance - (d) mark band 3). However the travel and tourism industry is dynamic and constantly changing. A popular journey used to meet the mark band 3 criteria is the one from *Barcelona to Florence*. At the time the specification was written, direct flights were not possible. Now that they are, centres are advised to select a different journey where direct flights are not possible to present candidates the challenge of 'some difficulty in access' and meet mark band 3 requirements. It is pleasing to note that this advice has been accepted by many centres and suitable alternatives were seen.

AO4 - Good practice that helps achievement:

- Demonstrating assessment with the use of linking statements and phrases, e.g.
 - 'this will be suitable because'
 - 'this means that'
 - 'I don't think this would be comfortable and is totally unsuitable'
 - 'this is good because it means'
- Using a structured format for the assessment. For each mode considered, subheadings of each factor are given and candidates are able to assess suitability against each factor guided by the headings.
- Where the pen portrait details are included with the evidence and the departure point and destination is clearly stated.
- Where candidates include an 'introduction' that identifies the complex needs of the tourists in terms of travel.

Accuracy of Marking

Generally, marking still tended to be generous although there was some evidence that the '*best fit*' assessment model was being applied. Details of how to apply the best fit model are well documented in previous reports.

Candidate evidence should be assessed solely against the criteria in the specification. The tasks to be completed are detailed on page 36 of the unit specification, Assessment Evidence. For each task there are three marks bands.

NOTE: The mark band statements do not set the tasks, they outline the assessment criteria. When task requirements are not met (e.g. Task b) this limits achievement.

As seen in the last series, there was some evidence of harsh marking within Mark Band 1. Marks below the mid/entry point are appropriate if there is little evidence that meets the assessment criteria. If a task is incomplete or missing these weaknesses can be balanced against any strengths in evidence.

Task (a)

Overall marking was slightly generous for this task. Weaknesses on the maps were often the accuracy of the locations of destinations and lack of detail. Also transport routes and gateways shown were not 'appropriate' (i.e. relevant to the category) and labels absent. In the explanation, whilst examples of destinations and features are required to access higher marks they should be used to *support* the explanation. The inclusion of examples does not move the work into higher mark bands it is the explanation that is the discriminating factor.

Mark band 2 was best fit where maps have detail, accuracy and relevant routes are shown to each 'key' destination and where there is explanation of categorisation with reference to features that includes examples and where there is also explanation of difficulties with examples.

Task (b)

Marking of this task was generous. The two elements of the tasks were often merged and this hinders achievement of the higher mark bands. There was little evidence of discrimination of key features and understanding of appeal to different types of tourist was not evident in most cases. Explanations were often brief and/or descriptive. Some tended to explain the suitability of a holiday, rather than how the destination features met the needs. Needs were mainly straightforward. Mark band 2 could only be considered if the key features had been described in detail and there were clear links between features and the needs of the tourist in the explanation. Where needs are straightforward rather than complex, this is a weakness and marks from the lower end of mark band 2 would be appropriate.

Task (c)

Marking of this task was slightly generous. This task requires evidence of *research and analysis*. Marking tended to be most generous where the research evidence had significant weaknesses. For instance where the research element was at mark band 1 i.e. sources were limited (mainly Internet/websites) and evidence of independence was not included. Mark band 2 requires candidates to use different types of sources for their research. For this mark band, candidates are also required to have

conducted independent research. See comments regarding type of evidence required. In terms of research, for mark band 2 candidates should also reference their sources. Evidence tended to have some analysis yet coverage of controllable factors was superficial. This is a weakness at mark band 2. It is not required that evidence must clearly meet all requirements of mark band 2, to gain marks from mark band 2. However, for mark band 2 to be considered best fit, there should be more of mark band 2 met than mark band 1.

Task (d)

Marking in this task tended to be more accurate. This task requires *assessment*. For many samples, mark band 2 was best fit for evidence that was clearly *an assessment of a range* of factors and modes of transport where *complex* needs had been considered and there was some *difficulty* in access to the destination. For marks at mark band 2 and mark band 3, the destination should have some difficulty in access and some complex needs. Theoretical assessments, not related to tourists needs, should limit the marks awarded.

Administration

OPTEMS forms were completed correctly.

Candidates and assessors are required to sign the Mark record Sheets to confirm the authenticity of candidates work. Assessors should ensure, therefore, that where additional support has been provided to a candidate, or where a candidate has made overuse of printed material from internet sites or large sections from text books, these are not credited.

If the samples identified do not include work with the highest or lowest mark these should be supplied.

Many centres submitted task feedback sheets as provided on the Edexcel website. This was useful to show how assessment decisions have been reached.

Moderators do find it useful where assessors annotate candidate work. Ideally, annotation should focus on the Mark Band descriptors and key evidence. Annotation on coursework to show how assessment decisions have been reached is now a JCQ requirement.

General Comments

Edexcel does not require candidates to submit their portfolios in a file, or plastic wallets. It is sufficient for candidates to provide all work tied with treasury tags, providing it can be easily identified and accessed. In addition to the Candidate Authentication, there should ideally be a front cover stating name of candidate, centre and candidate number. Evidence for each task should be clearly separated, ideally by a task feedback sheet.

Only evidence used to determine the mark awarded need be submitted in a portfolio. That evidence should be for tasks a), b), c) and d).

This unit allows the opportunity for oral communication in presenting a suitable destination to a customer. If this format is used, all supporting evidence such as visual aids, notes, documentation etc. must be included. Candidates' portfolios should include the assessment checklist or observation statement and a detailed witness testimony (exemplars can be found on the Edexcel website). The assessor should describe the candidate's performance in detail to clearly justify the marks awarded. Statements should relate to the task requirements and the mark band criteria. This evidence should be signed and dated by the assessor.

Grade Boundaries

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