

# Examiners' Report Summer 2010

**GCE**

## **New GCSE 5GA04 Geography Coursework**

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## **Unit 5GA04 Controlled Assessment Introduction**

The Controlled Assessment was offered for the first time as part of the June 2010 series. Centres were asked to select one or more task topics set by Edexcel, and to use these as the basis to replace of the former coursework. Many of the initial aims of the controlled assessment were met with candidates producing a more succinct piece of work, which, due to the nature of the high level of control in the later stages, was also more representative of the individual candidate's understanding of the geography involved.

The resulting submitted work was frequently of a very high standard, and centres are to be congratulated for the way they, and their candidates, have adapted to the demands of the controlled assessment.

### **Administration**

There were few administrative errors on behalf of the centres, which are to be thanked for greatly assisting the moderation process.

The majority of work was submitted in simple light weight folders. A minority of centres used bulky ring binders and are requested to avoid doing so for future submissions.

A number of centres most helpfully provided detailed annotations directly to the submitted work or provided tables of separate comments which helped to clarify the reasons for the mark allocations.

### **General Comments**

The majority of centres choose to investigate the task question: 'Does the Central Business District of your chosen urban area have the characteristics of a typical CBD?' (Urban task question). A minority investigated 'Why is there a need to manage tourist pressure in your chosen location?' with a few selecting to investigate the coastal or transport themes. Some of the highest quality work resulted from the urban and coastal task questions.

The majority of centres submitted work based on one task question. However, there were instances where groups from the same centre investigated different tasks, usually the tourist and urban themes.

Whilst the majority of the centres had evidently designed new tasks with reference to the task questions set, a few attempted to adopt their previous coursework to the requirements of the controlled assessment. Invariably this meant that the submitted work lacked focus, and the candidates frequently collected data which was not relevant to the task title.

There were also instances of centres adapting the task titles and using these as the basis for their controlled assessment. It is essential that the centres use the task titles as set by Edexcel. Further guidance can be obtained from the Edexcel website.

### **Criterion A - Purpose of the investigation**

This section requires candidates to locate the geographical area of the investigation, to identify the issue or problem investigated and to provide some evaluation of this issue.

All candidates were able to locate their investigations, although the depth varied from simple statements to detailed and frequently annotated maps and photographs of the data collection sites. GIS was used most effectively by some candidates, while others provided well-constructed sketch maps. The majority subdivided the task question into as series of sub aims or questions, for example:

Hypothesis 1. There is evidence that the coastal protection at my location is successful. I will investigate what coastal protection has been used, compared to the areas to the north and the south of my study area.

Hypothesis 2. The land use and infrastructure at my location are of significant value to merit coastal protection. For this I will look at the land use and infrastructure, such as roads. I will evaluate whether the value of the land and the impacts on the community of coastal erosion outweigh the cost of coastal protection.'

Very few candidates were able to offer any evaluation of the issue concerned.

### **Criterion B- methods of collecting data.**

All of the submitted work placed a strong emphasis on primary data collection. Candidates who had outlined a series of aims in Criterion A usually gained higher marks for this section, as the data collection focused well on the task question.

Candidates were able to describe the processes of data collection, frequently making use of data collection tables.

It was felt that some candidates might have expanded the explanation of the data collection processes. Some relatively simple statements were provided for example;

‘I carried out a visitor survey, I interviewed 60 people. This was to find out how far tourists travel and why.’

Such statements as the above do not qualify for the higher levels for this criterion

Some candidates used a very limited range of one or two data collection techniques (interviews and questionnaires) which consequently provided a some-what limited amount of data. This lack of primary data tended to have a limiting effect on the content and validity of the remainder of the task.

### **Criterion C- methods of presenting data.**

Some candidates demonstrated great proficiency with a range of data presentation techniques, and many showed competence with various ICT packages. In general, diagrams and maps were given scales, titles and relevant labels.

Some candidates included the range of more sophisticated methods required to reach the higher levels for this criterion. Some excellent flow maps, annotated sketches, kite diagrams and transect cross sections were seen.

However, centres are requested to note that studies containing basic data presentation methods such as bar charts, pie charts and photographs which are simply labelled and without some detailed annotations should not be awarded higher than level one or level two for this criterion.

### **Criterion D - Analysis and Conclusions.**

These sections of the controlled assessment were carried out under high levels of control. A number of centres required their candidates to hand write their responses for these criterion. All the candidates were able to offer some concluding comments, the best of which considered the original sub-aims and or questions given as part of the purpose of the investigation. Some candidates were able to offer extended analytical comments.

‘The attractive view was probably a factor contributing to the higher level of tourism. The money made from tourism may have been put into improving the area and therefore improving the view, therefore the tourism in the area helps to protect the honey pot site.’

Frequently, however, the analysis was limited to descriptive comments, and therefore did not reach the highest level for this criterion. Where the centres awarded high levels for brief outlines of the data and did not provide detailed conclusions, the marks were adjusted.

Concluding comments varied from extremely simple to some extended and very observant pieces of writing. In a number of task questions based on the urban theme, candidates returned to the models they had identified in criterion A.

### **Criterion E - Evaluation**

This work was carried out under high levels of control.

Nearly all the candidates were able to evaluate some aspects of their controlled assessment. Invariably, this consisted of consideration of the limitations of the data collection processes and consequently the candidates could only obtain level one. However, some excellent evaluations of all aspects of the work were seen where candidates were able to comment on the validity of their findings based on the limitations of the work as a whole.

### **Criterion F - Planning and Organisation**

Most of the submitted work was well organised, and the majority of candidates attained at least Level 2 for this criterion. The most effective studies included diagrams and graphs that were integrated into the text, even if this was sometimes a brief mentioned; 'The results I found are shown in graph 5'.

Candidate acknowledged sources of secondary data, including maps, books and websites where these had been used.

All of the centres made effective use of ICT to enhance studies. Hand written annotations and labels, although only rarely seen, were easy to read. Over all, the submitted work was extremely well presented.

### Overall Subject Grade Boundaries

| Grades | Max. Mark | A  | B  | C  | D  | E  | F  | G  |
|--------|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
|        | 050       | 37 | 34 | 31 | 26 | 21 | 16 | 11 |

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