

Pearson Edexcel

Level 3 Extended Project

Unit 2 Investigation/Field Study

Specification

Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Extended Project
First teaching from Summer 2008 | First certification from 2009

Issue 4

About Pearson

We are the world's leading learning company operating in countries all around the world. We provide content, assessment and digital services to learners, educational institutions, employers, governments and other partners globally. We are committed to helping equip learners with the skills they need to enhance their employability prospects and to succeed in the changing world of work. We believe that wherever learning flourishes so do people.

About this document

This guidance document contains all of the information relevant to one of four optional unit approaches available to candidates who are completing an extended project qualification with Pearson Edexcel. The annexe documents at the end of the document are those that are specific to the unit approach, for which candidates and centres are required to submit. Our main qualification [specification document](#) provides information relevant to the overarching qualification structure and administration, assessment, tutor guidance, malpractice, and any additional information.

References to third party materials made in this document are made in good faith. Pearson does not endorse, approve or accept responsibility for the content of materials, which may be subject to change, or any opinions expressed therein. (Materials may include textbooks, journals, magazines and other publications and websites.)

All information in this document is correct at time of publication.

ISBN 978 1 446 96186 5

All the material in this publication is copyright
© Pearson Education Limited 2023

Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Extended Project – © **Reimar/Shutterstock**

Unit 2: Investigation/Field Study

Level 3

Guided learning hours: 120

Introduction

The investigation/field study provides learners with the opportunity to carry out a practical investigative project. This project recognises the importance of collecting, analysing and evaluating data to answer a question or support a hypothesis.

The unit requires the learner to plan, carry out and evaluate the project to find out if the evidence supports their initial question or hypothesis. The validity, reliability and accuracy of the data must also be examined to ensure that the conclusion reached is robust. The learner will present their findings to a selected audience.

The investigation/field study requires the learner to manage the project and to take responsibility for adhering to safe working practices. It provides opportunities to develop skills in problem solving, decision making and communication. The learner is also introduced to the specialist techniques involved in an investigation/field study.

It is estimated that the investigation/field study will be 4000-5000 words in length, tending towards the lower end where significant quantities of quantitative data are involved. Learners will not be penalised for producing work outside the suggested word count, but they should ensure their word count allows them to meet the assessment objectives.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Be able to identify, plan and manage an investigation or field study
- 2 Be able to undertake research, collect evidence and select information using appropriate methodology
- 3 Be able to interpret evidence, draw conclusions and write up results into a finished investigation or field study
- 4 Be able to present findings, conclusions and an evaluation to an audience.

The assessment evidence presented by the learner must evidence all the above learning outcomes.

Unit summary and Learning Outcomes

Learning outcome number	Learning outcome	Assessment
	The learner will:	The learner can:
1	Be able to identify, plan and manage an investigation or field study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify the main objectives for the project • provide an appropriate plan with risks identified • use organisational skills and strategies appropriately
2	Be able to undertake research, collect evidence and select information using appropriate methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • select relevant information from appropriate secondary research sources • obtain raw data or information • relate resources to the research question or hypothesis
3	Be able to analyse and interpret evidence, draw conclusions and write up results into a finished investigation or field study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • write up the investigation/field study, using appropriate style and structure • interpret evidence gathered and present data appropriately • draw conclusions
4	Be able to present findings, conclusions and an evaluation to an audience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review and evaluate the project and own learning • present the project outcomes in an organised manner, engaging with audience and responding to questions.

Unit content

1 Be able to identify, plan and manage an investigation or field study

Identifying and planning the project

Learners should select a topic from an area which interests them. They should conduct a literature review to help them narrow down the topic to a working title, which is likely to be in the form of a question or hypothesis. Before they begin, learners should be clear about what they plan to investigate and how they will do it.

Learners should ensure when finalising their question or hypothesis that:

- required primary and secondary sources are identified in advance and that these are accessible during the project
- required resources are available to use.

As part of their proposal, learners must complete the project proposal form (*Annexe B*). This must be signed off by the tutor-assessor before any further work can be carried out (see *page 15*). The title/topic must be considered suitable by the tutor-assessor, be capable of investigation, and suitable in size to be completed in the time available.

Completed project proposal forms should include objectives and a rationale for their choice of topic/title. They should also identify the proposed activities that they will need to undertake, for example:

- background reading
- conducting a literature review of data collection resources available
- conducting research and collecting data
- analysing information and drawing conclusions
- writing up the project, checking and re-drafting
- evaluating the project and own learning
- preparing for the presentation.

Plans should also include the resources that they will require and prepare for contingencies.

The tutor-assessor and project proposal checker must sign off the project proposal form before the learner can do any more work (see *page 15*). By confirming that the project is appropriate, the centre is confirming that the proposal will give the learners scope to achieve all of the assessment objectives.

Managing the project

During the course of the project, learners must keep individual records which document its progress, the activities undertaken and the decision-making process, using an 'activity log'. An example activity log can be found in *Annexe C* and electronic copies can be downloaded from the Pearson website.

Learners should monitor their own progress, adapting their plan and adjusting their timelines where necessary; where this occurs, this should be recorded in the activity log.

Summary of evidence required from learner¹

- The project proposal form
- The activity log.

2 Be able to undertake research, collect evidence and select information using appropriate methodology

Learners should:

- use their chosen techniques safely to collect their data
- research, analyse and interpret data and information from primary/secondary sources
- extract, interpret and summarise information
- show connections between ideas, information, sources etc
- present the research in a coherent, well-organised manner
- be independently motivated and seek out their own research material.

Learners should select a range of secondary sources that contain information appropriate to their question or hypothesis. Information can be gathered from a range of sources (for example books, journals, the internet). Learners should assess the usefulness and validity of evidence and reference them clearly in their report, using a consistent system of referencing. References should make clear which author is being quoted, and where the quotation comes from. There should also be a bibliography which uses an appropriate and consistent format.

In contrast with *Unit 1: Dissertation*, in *Unit 2: Investigation/Field Study* learners are expected to use relevant data collection methods, such as measurements, observations, experiments, surveys, questionnaires. Learners therefore need to understand why valid data collection methods are important. They must consider the accuracy and reliability of data that they collect, to ensure that the measurements and observations can be reproduced by others. Learners need to understand that the materials, procedures and calculations that they select must

¹ If clearly referenced, credit can be given for additional evidence of planning and managing the project contained in any supplementary materials submitted for assessment

be the most appropriate for their investigation/field study. Learners should demonstrate that they have considered variables and used control methods where appropriate.

Learners should use their chosen techniques safely to collect their data, with careful use of materials and equipment. The collection of data should be methodical and well organised.

Summary of evidence required from learner

- Research carried out. This is likely to be contained within relevant sections of the written up investigation/field study (see *learning outcome 3*).

3 Be able to analyse and interpret evidence, draw conclusions and write up results into a finished investigation or field study

The write-up of the investigation/field study needs to be organised. There are different possible ways of structuring it, which will vary depending on the nature of the question and the type of research carried out. One possible structure is:

- Introduction
- Literature review
- Data collection methods
- Results and analysis
- Discussion/conclusion
- References and bibliography.

The different sections should all follow each other in a logical manner.

The introduction will include an explanation of the question or hypothesis and a rationale for the choice of this question, such as why it is important or interesting to the learner.

The literature review should describe previous studies/data that are relevant to the question (see *learning outcome 2*).

The data collection methods section will describe what was done and summarise the data or findings obtained (see *learning outcome 2*).

The results and analysis section is where the results are analysed and interpreted and links made to previous work. For quantitative studies, learners should analyse their data, searching for patterns and trends within it. Suitable calculations (for example statistical tests) should be carried out where appropriate. Learners should make a case for a particular interpretation.

There should also be a discussion/conclusion, summarising what has been found in relation to the original question or hypothesis. There should also be recommendations, such as how their results can be used by others, the significance of their results, wider implications, suggestions for further work, etc.

Learners should be encouraged to plan and draft their work before producing the finished piece of writing.

Care should be taken with the presentation of the writing, with appropriate use made of headings, paragraphs, page numbering, labelling of diagrams, and font sizes and styles. Learners should also take care to use language accurately and appropriately, for example spelling, grammar, punctuation, technical language, and an appropriately neutral or formal style.

For more information about the referencing and bibliography, see *learning outcome 2*.

Summary of evidence required from learner

- The write-up of the investigation/field study.

4 Be able to present findings, conclusions and an evaluation to an audience

The evaluation

Learners must produce an evaluation of the project. Some or all of it could be included within the write up of the field study/investigation itself, or it could be a separate piece of work.

The evaluation should aim to address:

- the extent to which the learner achieved what they set out to achieve
- possible weaknesses in, and limitations of, their methodology and interpretations
- how well they performed at different stages of the project
- what they would do differently next time and why
- what they have learned about conducting research and writing up a field study/investigation, and how useful this has been to them

The presentation

The findings should be presented to an audience. The presentation should summarise what the field study/investigation was about, what was done, the findings, and conclusions that can be drawn from it. It must be appropriate to the selected audience in terms of length, language used, room selected and conditions, and also in terms of any handouts and ICT used.

The presentation must demonstrate the use of appropriate communication skills and the learner should be able to respond to questioning from the audience in a capable manner.

Further information about the presentation is given in the EPQ specification and can be found on the Edexcel website.

Summary of evidence required from learner

- The evaluation. This may be a written evaluation or some or all of it could be covered within the presentation.
- The presentation and any supporting material. For oral presentations, the evidence must include an observation record completed by the tutor assessor, along with any notes, handouts, etc prepared by the learner; the presentation does **not** need to be recorded on audio/video.

Marking grid for Investigation/Field Study

Investigation/Field Study: AO1 — Manage

Mark band 1	Mark band 2	Mark band 3
The question or hypothesis is identified and is developed with a lot of guidance, support and assistance from the tutor-assessor. The question or hypothesis may lack focus .	The question or hypothesis is identified and is developed with some guidance, support and assistance from the tutor-assessor and is then finalised and refined by the learner . The question or hypothesis is reasonably focussed .	The question or hypothesis is identified and is developed with limited guidance, support and assistance from the tutor-assessor but is then finalised and refined independently by the learner . The question or hypothesis is well defined and clearly focussed .
The project plan gives objectives for the project and a brief rationale. Most of the main tasks to be completed are listed . Potential problems are mentioned .	The project plan gives clear objectives for the project and a clear rationale. All of the main tasks to be completed are provided in an appropriate order and described, with an appropriate time span allocated for some tasks . Potential problems are described .	The project plan is clear and concise , with clear and detailed objectives and rationale . All of the main tasks to be completed are provided in an appropriate order and described in detail, with an appropriate time span allocated for each task. Potential problems are described and there are sensible ideas for how these can be overcome.
The learner shows limited organisational ability and time management skills when managing the project. The learner maintains cursory records of activities undertaken during the project. There is some monitoring of own progress .	The learner shows reasonable organisational ability and time management skills when managing the project. The learner maintains clear records of activities undertaken during the project, including problems encountered and steps taken to overcome them . Progress is monitored against the original plan .	The learner shows a high level of organisational ability and time management skills when managing the project. The learner maintains clear and detailed records of activities undertaken during the project, including problems encountered and steps taken to overcome them . Progress is monitored against the original plan and adjustments made to the plan where necessary .
0–3 marks	4–6 marks	7–9 marks

See *pages 9-11* for guidance on how to use the marking grid.

Investigation/Field Study: AO2 — Use resources

Mark band 1	Mark band 2	Mark band 3
<p>Some sources have been used and investigated. There is some referencing of research sources and a bibliography is included, listing most of the sources.</p>	<p>A range of different types of sources have been used and investigated. Research sources are referenced appropriately and a bibliography is included, listing the sources in an appropriate format.</p>	<p>A wide range of different types of sources have been used and thoroughly investigated. Research sources are referenced appropriately and consistently and a bibliography is included, listing the sources in an appropriate and consistent format.</p>
<p>Data collection techniques are used with some success but with some guidance from the tutor-assessor. Information and resources have been selected and some of this is directly relevant to the research question. Information has been collated in reference to the research question posed.</p>	<p>Data collection techniques are used successfully with limited guidance from the tutor-assessor. Information and resources relevant to the research question have been selected. Information has been analysed in reference to the research question posed.</p>	<p>Data collection techniques are successfully and independently used by the learner. Information and resources relevant to the research question have been carefully selected. Information has been analysed and synthesised in reference to the research question posed.</p>
<p>There are attempts to establish links and connections between the information used, but some of these may be tenuous. Some understanding of the less complex areas of the research topic has been shown.</p>	<p>The learner has established clear links and connections between the information used. A reasonable understanding of the complexities of the research area in general, and the research question in particular, has been shown.</p>	<p>Clear, concise and detailed links have been established between the information used. A thorough understanding of the complexities of the research question has been shown. Learners have placed the research question into the wider context of the research area.</p>
<p>0–4 marks</p>	<p>5–8 marks</p>	<p>9–12 marks</p>

See *pages 9-11* for guidance on how to use the marking grid.

Investigation/Field Study: AO3 — Develop and realise

Mark band 1	Mark band 2	Mark band 3
<p>An attempt has been made to structure the investigation/field study, using sections.</p>	<p>The investigation/field study is structured in sections and there is some evidence of the ability to link them together coherently.</p>	<p>The investigation/field study is well structured, with appropriate sections that are linked together coherently throughout.</p>
<p>Information is generally presented in a logical order although some of it may not be wholly relevant. Some use is made of techniques that aid clarity, eg numbering, headings, paragraphing, labelling.</p> <p>Language errors (eg grammar, syntax, vocabulary) may sometimes be intrusive but they generally do not interfere with communication. Some technical terms are used.</p>	<p>Information is presented in a logical order and is generally clear and relevant. Generally effective use is made of techniques that aid clarity, eg numbering, headings, paragraphing, labelling.</p> <p>There are few language errors (eg grammar, syntax, vocabulary), and they are generally not intrusive and do not interfere with communication. Technical terms are generally used appropriately.</p>	<p>Information is presented in a logical order and it is consistently clear and relevant. Effective and consistent use is made of techniques that aid clarity, eg numbering, headings, paragraphing, labelling.</p> <p>There are few language errors (eg grammar, syntax, vocabulary) and they are not intrusive and they do not interfere with communication. Technical terms are used consistently and effectively.</p>
<p>The content shows some understanding of the topic and an attempt to answer the agreed hypothesis or question. Some trends or patterns in the data are identified.</p>	<p>The content shows good understanding of the topic area and findings that relate directly to the agreed hypothesis or question. The main trends or patterns in the data are identified and analysed. Where appropriate, some mathematical calculations are performed.</p>	<p>The content shows a thorough and perceptive understanding of the topic area and a clearly argued and well-thought out interpretation that answers the agreed hypothesis or question and is supported by several lines of argument. Trends or patterns in the data are identified and analysed perceptively using relevant models and theories. Where appropriate, mathematical calculations are performed.</p>

Investigation/Field Study: AO3 — Develop and realise (cont.)

Mark band 1	Mark band 2	Mark band 3
There is a brief conclusion that summarises the findings.	There is a clear conclusion that summarises the findings. There are some suggestions for further work.	There is a clear and well-developed conclusion that proficiently summarises the findings. There are well-thought out suggestions for further work and an awareness of any wider implications.
0-8 marks	9-16 marks	17-24 marks

See *pages 9-11* for guidance on how to use the marking grids.

Investigation/Field Study: AO4 — Review

Mark band 1	Mark band 2	Mark band 3
<p>Overall the learner shows some self-awareness when evaluating the project and the extent to which they have achieved their aims. The learner attempts to identify the limitations of their project’s methodology and interpretations, but this may not correspond with the tutor-assessor’s own judgement.</p> <p>The learner identifies some basic ideas for what they could do differently next time. They have drawn basic conclusions about the process of researching and writing an investigation/field study that could help them in future.</p>	<p>Overall the learner shows good insight and self-awareness in evaluating the project and the extent to which they have achieved their aims. The learner is generally successful at identifying and explaining the limitations of their project’s methodology and interpretations.</p> <p>The learner describes ideas for what they could do differently next time. They have drawn clear conclusions about the process of researching and writing an investigation/field study that could help them in future.</p>	<p>Overall the learner shows a high level of insight and self-awareness in evaluating the project and the extent to which they have achieved their aims. The learner is highly adept at identifying and analysing in detail the limitations of their project’s methodology and interpretations.</p> <p>The learner explains and justifies ideas for what they could do differently next time. They have drawn clear and perceptive conclusions about the process of researching and writing an investigation/field study that could help them in future.</p>
<p>The presentation is structured so that the audience can see that there has been some attempt to organise it logically and the learner shows basic ability to convey the main ideas.</p>	<p>The presentation is structured so that it is reasonably clear to the audience how it is organised and how the different parts link together and the learner shows good ability to convey the main ideas.</p>	<p>The presentation is clearly and logically structured so that it is completely clear to the audience how the different parts link together and the learner shows a high level of ability to convey the main ideas.</p>

Investigation/Field Study: AO4 — Review (cont.)

Mark band 1	Mark band 2	Mark band 3
<p>If an oral presentation is given, it is generally audible, although it is likely that the learner relies heavily on supporting materials, eg notes or cue cards. The learner shows limited ability to engage the audience or hold their attention. Where visual aids are used, these attempt to support the presentation, although they may not be clearly visible to the audience and may contain too much information.</p>	<p>If an oral presentation is given, it is audible and reasonably paced; although it is likely that the learner relies on supporting materials, eg notes or cue cards, there are parts of the presentation that are not simply read aloud. The learner engages with the audience and holds their attention in places. Where visual aids are used, these are relevant and are reasonably effective at supporting the presentation. They show reasonable clarity and design.</p>	<p>If an oral presentation is given, it is clearly audible and well paced. The learner may make some use of supporting materials, eg notes of cue cards, but the presentation is not simply read aloud. The learner engages well with the audience and holds their attention. Where visual aids are used, these are relevant and are consistently effective at supporting the presentation. They are clearly visible to the audience, are well designed and do not contain too much information.</p>
<p>Some questions are answered and the learner shows reasonable subject knowledge.</p>	<p>Questions are answered reasonably clearly and effectively and the learner shows reasonable subject knowledge.</p>	<p>The learner handles questions calmly and confidently. Questions are answered clearly and insightfully and the learner shows good subject knowledge.</p>
0–3 marks	4–6 marks	7–9 marks

See *pages 9-11* for guidance on how to use the marking grids.

Total marks out of 54.

Annexe B: Project Proposal Form

Level 3 [Project Proposal Form](#) for *Unit 2: Investigation/Field Study*. This form is for reference only. Please refer to the website to download a copy of this form.

Learner name

Centre name

Tutor-assessor name

Proposed title of project

Date

Learner registration number

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Centre number

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Unit

Unit 2: Investigation/Field study
--

Section One: Title, objectives, responsibilities

Project objectives (eg, what is the question you want to answer? What do you want to learn how to do? What do you want find out?)

Title or working title of project (in the form of a question):

If it is a group project, what will your role or responsibilities be?

Section Two: Reasons for choosing this project

Reasons for choosing the project (eg links to other subjects you are studying, personal interest, future plans, knowledge/skills you want to improve, reasons why the topic is important):

Level 3 [Project Proposal Form](#) for *Unit 2: Investigation/Field Study*. This form is for reference only. Please refer to the website to download a copy of this form.

Section Three: Activities and timescales	
Activities to be carried out during the project (eg, research, data collection, numerical analysis, writing, preparing for the presentation, etc)	How long this will take
Milestone one: <u>Target date (set by tutor-assessor):</u> Milestone two: <u>Target date (set by tutor-assessor):</u>	
Section Four: Resources	
What resources will you need for your research, data collection, write up and presentation (eg equipment, ICT, libraries, books, journals)	
What you areas of research will you cover?	

Level 3 [Project Proposal Form](#) for Unit 2: *Investigation/Field Study*. This form is for reference only. Please refer to the website to download a copy of this form.

Section Five: Contingencies	
What problems might you have in the data collection process?	What will you do to try to stop this from happening? What will you do if it does happen?
Comments and agreement from tutor-assessor	
Comments (optional):	
I confirm that the project is appropriate.	
Agreed:	(name) (date)
Comments and agreement from proposal checker	
Comments (optional):	
I confirm that the project is appropriate.	
Agreed:	(name) (date)

Annexe C: Activity Log

This [Activity Log](#) is for reference only. Please refer to the website to download a copy of this form.

Learner name:

Learner registration number:

Centre name:

Centre number:

Teacher-assessor name:

Use this to record the progress of your project. You may want to discuss:

- What you have done (eg from one week to the next)
- (if you are working in a group), what discussions you have had
- Any changes that you have (or will need) to make to your plans
- What resources you have found/hope to find
- What problems you are encountering and how you are solving them
- What you are going to do next

Date	Comments

Annexe D: Candidate Record Sheet

The [Candidate Record Sheet](#) must be completed for every candidate to confirm that the work is their own, and has been authenticated by the teacher. This is also the document where you mark the candidate's work.

The form is available to download from the Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Extended Project Coursework materials web page.

A form should be completed for each candidate and submitted with the work for moderation.

Candidate Record Sheet - Level 3 Extended Project

Learner Name _____ Learner number _____

Centre Name _____ Centre Number _____

Unit Name _____ Unit Number _____

Project checklist

The final Project should include the following items:

- a Project Proposal Form
- a Project activity log or diary
- records of research carried out (which could be included within the project outcome or given separately)
- the Project Outcome*
- an evaluation
- evidence of the presentation

Project Contents

Please list the format of the items submitted as part of the Project, note whether this evidence is shared with other candidates and if so who (A4 Report, portfolio, sketchbook, audio file of sound track, video file of play/film, etc)

Authentication confirmation/consent	
<p>Candidate: I hereby certify to the best of my knowledge that this work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has been produced without any assistance beyond that recorded and allowed by the scheme of assessment and have clearly referenced any sources and any AI tools used in the work. • is not work which has been or will be submitted for another qualification. <p>I acknowledge that Pearson may use candidate work for the purposes of standardisation, training, and exemplar material.</p>	<p>Signature:</p>
<p>Teacher: I confirm that the learner’s work was conducted under the conditions laid out by the specification. I have authenticated the learner’s work and am satisfied that to the best of my knowledge the work produced is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • solely that of the learner and the learner has clearly referenced any sources and any artificial intelligence (AI) tools used in the work. • is not work that has been or will be submitted for another qualification. 	<p>Signature:</p> <p>Print Name in <i>block capitals please:</i></p>

Teacher – Assessor marks and supporting comments

Comments related to the assessment criteria which support the mark awarded for each Assessment Objective should be entered on the grid below.

Assessment Objective	Teacher-Assessor comments	Teacher-Assessor Mark	Moderator Mark
AO1 Manage (9 marks) Comment:			
AO2 Use Resources (12 marks) Comment:			
AO3 Develop and Realise (24 marks) Comment:			

Assessment Objective	Teacher-Assessor comments	Teacher-Assessor Mark	Moderator Mark
AO4 Review <i>(9 marks)</i> Comment:			
AO4 Review <i>(9 marks)</i> Comment:			
	Total Mark	/54	/54

November 2023

For information about Pearson Qualifications, including Pearson Edexcel, BTEC and LCCI qualifications visit [qualifications.pearson.com](https://www.pearson.com/qualifications)

Edexcel and BTEC are registered trademarks of Pearson Education Limited

**Pearson Education Limited. Registered in England and Wales No. 872828
Registered Office: 80 Strand, London WC2R 0RL.**

VAT Reg No GB 278 537121

