OXFORD
INTERNATIONAL
AQA EXAMINATIONS

INTERNATIONAL AS AND A-LEVEL GEOGRAPHY

(9635)

Teaching guidance

For teaching from September 2018 onwards

For International AS and A-level exams
May/June 2019/2020 onwards

Our specification is published on our website **oxfordaqaexams.org.uk**. We will let centres know in writing about any changes to the specification. We will also publish changes on our website. The definitive version of our specification will always be the one on our website; this may differ from printed versions.

Contents

Introduction

This specification has been designed by an expert team to give international students an interesting and rigorous course in Geography. The course reflects the international contexts in which the students are studying, while at the same time preparing them for the further study of geography and related subjects (should they wish to do so) at leading universities across the world. It is based largely on the subject criteria for geography, developed in consultation with the major universities in the UK, and so should help students make a smooth transition to university study of the subject.

It is not the intention of this guide to make comparisons with reformed UK A-levels. The specification offers a unitary approach to AS and A-level, and the fieldwork section of the specification allows more flexibility in the collection of data than the UK A-level, so making allowances for the difficulties of data collection that may be encountered in some countries and regions of the world. The up-to-date approach to the subject, combined with its flexibility, makes this specification an exciting proposition for international centres.

Links to the criteria

There are two sections of the specification that are based very directly on the criteria established by the universities. These are:

- The water and carbon cycles.
- Changing places.

The water and carbon cycles in the subject criteria

As the criteria stressed, we have adopted a systems approach to the study of the water and carbon cycles. This approach is also followed in other aspects of the physical geography and, where relevant and to a less obvious degree, in parts of the human geography.

The movement of water (in solid, liquid and gaseous forms) through all stages of the water cycle must be studied. The forces driving the flows must be considered as must factors that affect the speed and direction of flows. Of course river systems must be considered as part of the water cycle but, and the universities were emphatic on this point, processes of erosion and deposition and the creation of fluvial landforms should not form part of the new A-levels. It was felt that these topics were covered in detail at GCSE and would probably be covered again in the early years of university courses and so they should not be covered again at A-level.

The inclusion of the carbon cycle in such a prominent way is a departure for A-level geography specifications. However, most courses have included many aspects of the carbon cycle as part of study of topics like climate change and the development of vegetation and ecosystems. In the new specification several aspects of geography with links to the carbon cycle are brought together is a structured study. Some understanding of the science of the cycle will be necessary but, fortunately, this is covered clearly in the textbook that goes with the course. The topic may look intimidating to non-scientists, but the book's guidance should allow all students to cope well with the topic.

Then, the studies of the water cycle and the carbon cycle are brought together to show how the two cycles inter-link to provide two of the essential elements necessary for the development of life on earth – both plant life and animal life, which obviously includes all human life. And, if the earlier parts of the topic look a little 'dry' to some students, the later sections bring the focus onto some of the most important issues facing humanity today.

Changing places in the subject criteria

If the water and carbon topic is the unfamiliar part of the physical geography specification then changing places is the unfamiliar part for the human geographers. This too has been included on the insistence of the university advisory group, whose intention was to make the A-level course a more suitable

preparation for university geography courses. This section asks students to deal with some of the more up-to-date concepts in modern human geography.

As in all sections of the specification, the changing places section is laid out with the main aspects of the theoretical background described first, with the applications of those theories following and the main case studies coming towards the end of the section. So, in the first few lessons on the topic students are expected to study some of the key ideas of place studies, such as the way different people can have quite different ideas about the nature of a place depending on their relationship with that place. For example:

- the views of 'insiders' who live and work in that place may be very different from the views of 'outsiders' who just pass through or visit as tourists
- views gained about a place from the media may be very different from the views gained from 'lived experience' of the place
- some people or groups make a deliberate effort to manage other people's views of that place – as when local government makes a deliberate to create a new 'tourist friendly' image or when local businesses try to create an image that will attract customers or other investors into the area
- some aspects of the nature of a place are due to 'endogenous' factors (the land it is built on, the buildings that have been constructed, the nature of the people who live there, etc), whilst other aspects of the place are a result of 'exogenous' factors (such as the place's contacts with neighbouring places, the surrounding region and country or even international links).

In this study of the theory of the geography of place reference should be made to examples, which illustrate the theoretical examples. Sometimes these examples can be drawn from the two detailed place studies that should form the core of the work later in this topic. However, it is unlikely that these two places will allow all aspects of the theory to be exemplified so, where necessary, other examples will need to be referenced. It is important to realise, at this point, that there is a difference between the case studies of the two chosen place studies and the examples used to illustrate points of theory.

The two case studies of the local place and the contrasting place will be studied in depth and detail. Each of these case studies will probably form the basis of study for one or two weeks and possibly more. On the other hand the illustrative examples will generally only be covered in part of a lesson. More detail of the choices of place study will be provided later in this document, under Teaching changing places.

Assessment Objectives (AOs)

The exams will measure how students have achieved the following Assessment Objectives.

AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of places, environments, concepts, processes, interactions and change, at a variety of scales (30–40% of the total marks available).
AO2	Apply knowledge and understanding in different contexts to interpret, analyse and evaluate geographical information and issues (30–40%).
AO3	Use a variety of relevant quantitative, qualitative and fieldwork skills to: • investigate geographical questions and issues • interpret, analyse and evaluate data and evidence • construct arguments and draw conclusions (20–30%).

Testing AO1 is comparatively straight forward. Examiners just have to make sure that knowledge and understanding of each of the components (places, environments, concepts, processes, interactions and change) are tested at a variety of scales, from local to global, in each year of examination.

Testing AO2 is rather more complex. Students will have to be asked to:

"**Apply** knowledge and understanding in **different contexts** to **interpret, analyse and evaluate** geographical information and issues".

There must be no room for confusion between the students' using their **learnt** understanding (tested as part of AO1) and their **application** of their knowledge of **different contexts** (tested as part of AO2).

The different contexts can be provided in two main ways:

1 by presenting students with new, unseen case study material and asking them to apply their knowledge and understanding to that material.

2 by asking students to bring together material from different parts of the specification, to show their understanding of links and connections between those different areas of the subject.

As with the testing of AO1, **testing AO3** will be comparatively straight forward and familiar to people who have been used to the testing of skills in previous A-level geography specifications. Practical skills of map reading, data handling, photo interpretation etc. and fieldwork skills will be tested by a variety of data response questions.

Given the demands of testing the AOs and allocating a specific proportion of the marks to each AO certain types of question will be used regularly to test the AOs either singly or in combination. These types of question are considered in the next section of these guidance notes.

Tasks and question types

In this section the question types of Papers 1a and 1b – four are dealt with first. Questions on Paper 5, Fieldwork and skills, are dealt with separately.

Point marked questions (1–4 marks)

These short answer questions will generally just test AO1 – the learnt knowledge and understanding component of the course. These questions will include:

- multiple choice questions, to be answered by choosing from four alternative answers by marking clearly inside a box next to the chosen answer
- answers needing one word, a single phrase or a short sentence
- 'definition' type of answers – but it should be noted that candidates might sometimes be asked to give the meaning of a word or phrase where different alternative meanings are possible and generally accepted by the geographical community. In such cases examiners will be instructed to allow flexibility and an inclusive approach to their marking. Oxford AQA International Examinations do not intend to produce a glossary containing acceptable definitions and excluding all other possible definitions.

Data response questions (6 marks)

These will be pure data response questions and will test students' skills at using, manipulating and analysing data from different sources, which could include tables of figures, maps, photographs, pieces of text, diagrams, etc. In each question they will be presented with one or more sources on a place, environment, process etc with which they will not be expected to be familiar. They will then be asked to analyse this data and to draw geographical conclusions from their analysis.

All marks from these questions will fall under the AO3 heading.

Unseen case studies (9 marks)

In order to award AO2 questions must either bring together aspects of the subject that are not directly connected in the spec or they must present unfamiliar material to students and ask them to apply their knowledge and understanding to that material and interpret, analyse and evaluate that material. Some of the 9 mark questions will do this.

These questions will combine the testing of AO1 and AO2. Students will be expected to show their learnt knowledge and understanding (to gain the AO1 marks) but also to apply that knowledge and understanding to the unfamiliar situation that has been presented in the question (to gain the AO2 marks).

These questions will be different from the pure data response questions in that they will not be focused on particular skills of data processing but will test students' ability to:

- work out their own way of interpreting the information that has been presented
- analyse the information and consider what is most relevant and applicable to the question set and then
- use the information to evaluate the situation and draw clear, relevant, evidence-based conclusions.

Essay questions (20 marks)

The 20 mark essay questions will also test AO1 and AO2. In the mark schemes for such essay questions 10 marks will be allocated for AO1 and 10 for AO2.

Obviously case studies will also be important here but new, unseen studies will not be practical.

So "…. knowledge and understanding of **places**, **environments**, **concepts**, **processes**, **interactions** and **change**, at a **variety of scales**" will need to be brought in by students, when relevant, to give the AO1 element. For this they will be expected to show good knowledge of their case studies and examples and of the key ideas that they have learnt during their course.

To test AO2 the "…different contexts…" rules will still apply. However, these different contexts will be introduced by setting questions that demand that the students make link between different aspects of the specification. This could mean:

- linking ideas from different parts of a single unit of study in a way that may not be stated explicitly in the unit
- linking ideas from different units – but this is only possible where the linked ideas come from a core unit, which all students must study; it would not be possible to use ask for links to an idea from an optional unit as that would be unfair on those who had not taken that option.

How the units fit together

Structure of the content

All students must study eight topics, four at AS and four at A-level.

At AS they must take two topics on the Physical paper and two on the Human paper. At A-level they again take two Physical geography topics and two Human geography topics.

Each topic is presented as follows:

- One or two paragraphs setting out the principles and philosophy of that topic and the aims of any study of that section of the course.
- The early content paragraphs, which list the basic ideas that underlie the study. Many of these basic ideas involve developing clear understanding of the key ideas and key definitions underlying the study. These basic ideas will often provide the content for the shorter, knowledge based, AO1 questions.
- The central paragraphs of each section will contain the more developed ideas. Here the way that the building blocks of knowledge from the earlier paragraphs must be combined and put together to develop the sophisticated understanding of place, process, interactions etc that lies at the heart of the subject.
- Towards the end of each section of content details will be given of the case study or studies that **must** be used to illustrate that topic. These case studies will often provide the important factual content of the 9 mark and 20 mark answers in the exam, so they will need to be studied in detail. Teachers and students should be aware that there will be plenty of opportunities to introduce references to other places as well as the two case studies but that these will probably need less detailed study. Credit will be given by examiners if such other examples are introduced into answers in a relevant way but studying of these other examples is not a compulsory part of the course.
- The final paragraphs of each section of the spec make reference to skills, including fieldwork skills. Wherever possible these skills should be integrated into the study of topics in the specification. Skills questions (AO3) will be included in all parts of the examination.

The systems approach

The systems approach has often been referenced in physical geography in the past but it has not usually been emphasised in teaching at A-level. Now the universities have insisted, in setting out the national criteria for geography, that it must form a central part of our teaching and examining. This means that the approach provides a unifying theme through all the units of physical geography. This approach emphasises the unity and interconnectedness of the different elements of physical geography and should ensure that students develop a sound intellectual understanding of the subject.

Teaching about systems should focus on the flows and movements within a system, whether that system is the water cycle or the carbon cycle, the desert geomorphological system or the coastal system, the ecosystem or even the global tectonic system. In all these systems we can study inputs, flows through the system and processes caused by those flows, stores, feedbacks and outputs. This way of structuring knowledge should help understanding of the different areas and regions of the world and also help students to develop their understanding of the way all phenomena are connected and inter-dependent.

While it is important that this structure provides a strong understanding of the subject it is equally important that it should, over the course as a whole, make learning and understanding both easier and more secure. By providing a consistent, firm scaffolding on which students can build their knowledge and understanding it should make that knowledge more accessible and useful both during their studies and beyond.

Case studies and examples

The combination of AO1 and AO2 in the assessment of the spec (along with the assessment of AO3 throughout the examinations) means that students need to:

- learn and understand the theories and key ideas
- learn and understand about the nature of places, environments, processes, etc through examples and case studies
- be able to apply their knowledge and understanding in unfamiliar situations.

In other words the study of case studies and examples is essential in all parts of the course but the specification should not be seen as being based **mainly** on those case studies. Rather students should base their work on the theories and ideas but then develop the flexibility of thinking and analysis to apply their understanding in the geographical situations that they encounter.

Of course they still need sound knowledge to support and illustrate their ideas – to provide the evidence for statements that they make and for conclusions that they draw – and each section of the spec gives details of the detailed case studies that **must** be studied. It should be remembered, though, that the case studies listed in each section will probably not cover the whole of the place/ environment knowledge that is needed. Other less detailed examples will also need to be referenced by students during their studies.

Care must be taken over the choice of case studies. The places chosen must be suitable to illustrate as many aspects of the course content as possible. Where two or more studies are chosen on the same section they must complement each other by showing clear contrasts which encourage detailed comparisons to be made.

Generally it is not advisable for students to try to reference too many different place studies during their course. If they do try to remember a multitude of different places, different names and isolated facts many students will become confused and find recall of key information difficult. So students should concentrate on a small number of detailed studies for each topic. Develop a well-structured knowledge of those places, let their familiarity with those places aid their recall and only move beyond those key case studies when a different example provides a clear illustration of an important geographical idea.

Teaching the water and carbon cycles

At first glance some of the content of this unit seems quite unfamiliar to some teachers but then closer study shows that this is not such a departure from the traditional content after all.

The main ideas of the water cycle have always been taught as part of A-level geography. With the increased emphasis on global warming and climate change the main ideas of the carbon cycle have also been taught to an increasing extent. The main aim of this section of the spec is to structure the study of those areas more carefully and to ensure that the studies are placed in a context of up-to-date knowledge and understanding of the topics.

A good way into the topic is to start with the distributions of water and carbon in the global systems, and to see how flows move the water and carbon between the various stores in the systems. This involves the introduction of some technical and scientific terms and concepts that may be unfamiliar to many students and some teachers. Fortunately there are many good sources, both in print and on line, which provide ample detail and concise explanations of these systems. Many of these sources are referenced in the Oxford International AQA scheme of work for this topic.

It should also be noted that the water cycle includes the movement of water through river systems, from precipitation to the ocean. Although the geography subject criteria specifically ruled out study of river valley geomorphology from all A-level courses this study of the water cycle does mean that factors that affect the flow of water through the system should be studied. This will include the influence of channel shape, bed roughness, gradient, etc. on the speed of flow and involve study of storm hydrographs. This is important in that it allows a lot of traditional river study to still be considered, albeit with a different emphasis, and it does allow some important opportunities for doing fieldwork.

Finally, if the scientific aspect of this topic seems difficult for some students, or if they find that it is not always clear just how relevant the topic is to their everyday experience, just keep reminding them that it is about water, carbon and **life**. There may well be more 'big issues' in this topic than in any other. Water and carbon are, indeed, the basis of all life on earth. Disruptions to either cycle have obvious effects on flooding, drought, global warming – or cooling, agricultural productivity and food supply, population dynamics and migration and the links between this topic and most, or all, other topics are obvious and of fundamental importance; and these links will almost certainly find their way into the exam papers.

Teaching globalisation and global governance

This section of the specification splits quite clearly into two parts:

- Globalisation, which deals with the increasing interdependence of the world's economic and trading systems and with the linked movements of people and ideas, and
- Global governance, which deals with attempts to develop systems to manage and regulate some of the consequences of globalisation.

Despite this clear split though it is essential that all students are aware of the links between the two sections. As has been stressed elsewhere in these notes the universities are insistent that students must be able to see these inter-connections clearly and so the examination boards must test their understanding of the links.

The key to studying the globalisation part of the spec is contained in the phrases "dimensions of globalisation: flows of capital, labour, products, services and information". Students must be aware that the five dimensions are inter-linked and inter-dependent. At the time of writing these notes some major political reactions are taking place, which seek to oppose and control these flows. It is important that students understand the nature of the forces working in some countries and regions to oppose globalisation but they should also be aware of the forces towards globalisation, which are operating on a scale that may be beyond the reach of individual countries' political control.

Then the key to studying the global governance part of the specification is to consider the need for organisations and institutions which can look beyond short-term and national interests and act for the greater good of the world's people as a whole. And, although such institutions are at a very early stage of development, it is important to consider what has been achieved so far, what might be achieved in future and what might the consequences be if global governance does not develop further.

Teaching changing places

This may be the part of the spec that is most unfamiliar to teachers, especially to those who are not recent graduates from university – and yet it does deal with many of the ideas that have become central to university work in human geography over recent years. 'Place theory' has become an important element of undergraduate study and the universities are insistent that we should be preparing students for such studies.

This section of the specification is similar to the others in that it begins with some key ideas on the theory of place:

- insider and outsider perspectives on place
- near places and far places
- directly experienced places and places experienced only through the media
- endogenous factors in the development of place
- exogenous factors in the development of place (relationships with other places)
- the ways in which relationships and connections, meaning and representation, affect continuity and change in the nature of places and our understanding of place

- the ways in which students' own lives and those of others are affected by continuity and change in the nature of places.

The paragraphs of the spec outlining these key ideas are followed by paragraphs on 'Relationships and connections' and 'Meaning and representation' and then by references to two chosen places, which should form a central part of the work on this topic. In putting together the Changing places part of the specification it was expected that the most efficient and coherent way of teaching the two sections headed 'Relationships and connections' and 'Meaning and representation' would be through reference to the two case studies. So it seems logical to consider this when choosing which two places to choose for the case studies.

Of course most schools and colleges will choose an area around or close to their own base. Then they should consider how well their second choice of place complements the local area in covering 'Relationships and connections' and 'Meaning and representation' and in allowing students to consider the 'lived experience' of people in those places.

In deciding which two places to choose the following considerations must be borne in mind:

- the local place should be somewhere that is familiar to the students
- the precise delineation of the local place will probably consider local administrative boundaries as data, such as census data, and will often be published using those boundaries
- it should be possible to walk around the whole of the chosen area in a day, possibly visiting to do fieldwork in that area
- in an urban area this might mean that the place has around 10,000 to 20,000 inhabitants although in a rural area the population might be lower
- the distant contrasting place must present a contrast in terms of its demographic structure and/or its culture and/or its economy. Finding such contrast is more important than measuring the purely physical distance away from the local area. It would be quite acceptable for the two places only to be 25 km apart – as long as they contrasted strongly and were 'distant' in terms of being experienced in very different ways by the students involved in their study
- in fact, choosing a contrasting place that is not very far away might be a big advantage in that it will allow the students to visit that place to do fieldwork
- each of the chosen places should show some coherence that makes it identifiable as a place and not just an area with a line drawn around it at random. In fact the ideas of 'neighbourhood' or 'locality' might also be used when considering the nature of the place to be studied.

Having chosen the two places it should be possible to teach a large proportion of the content and the ideas through reference to these two places. However, it is unlikely that the two places will cover every part of the Changing places content, so reference will almost certainly have to be made to other places. This will be especially true if the two chosen places are contrasting but not physically very distant – and probably in the same country, with many aspects of shared culture. In these cases teachers and students will probably want and need to make some references to places in different countries with markedly different environments and different cultures.

It is still important to remember that such 'additional' place studies are likely to be studied briefly and in far less detail than the two main place studies. It is likely that the longer 9 and 20 mark questions in the examination will be focused mainly on the two main place studies and will be open-ended enough to accommodate whatever places have been chosen for those two studies, without students needing to extend their answers to consider a greater variety of places.

Teaching urban geography

Once again, the choice of case studies and examples will be an important part of planning this section of the course. Bear the following points in mind:

- Two contrasting urban areas should be chosen as the major case studies. It is vital that these two should illustrate a variety of aspects of urban geography that must be studied in the rest of the urban geography section. They should complement each other in being different in many of the areas studied. Although the specification does not say that one **must** be from the developed world and one **must** be from the developing world it would be seem sensible to try to cover these two aspects of urban geography in the two main case studies.
- It might still be necessary to study some other examples in some detail, so as to illustrate topics such as urban climate, urban waste, disease in cities etc.
- If the place studies in Changing places have been carefully chosen they may link in well with some aspects of urban geography allowing for economies of teaching and learning time and allowing students to develop useful links between different parts of the specification.
- You are advised to try to find one example of an urban area to illustrate all of urbanisation, suburbanisation, counter-urbanisation and re-urbanisation. In many countries these are all going on at the same time, or evidence can be found showing how they all happened, often with more than one of those processes happening at the same time and, urban areas where these processes can be seen. These are often also ideal for illustrating other aspects of the specification, such as spatial differences in health and welfare.

Fieldwork

The specification states “all students completing this qualification must engage in a personal fieldwork investigation”.

This investigation will not be presented for marking but students will be tested on the whole process of fieldwork in the examination. Questions on Paper 5 will test:

- the student’s understanding of the ideas behind the completion of geography fieldwork and the aims of people carrying out such work
- the student’s ability to collect, present and analyse fieldwork data – sometimes involving the presentation and analysis of data provided in the paper
- the student’s knowledge and understanding gained from the personal fieldwork investigation.

Wherever possible the personal investigation should be based on the collection of primary data, by the students working in the field. However, the safety of students must remain a paramount concern at all times and it is recognised that there may be occasions and places where it is not possible to guarantee safety. In these circumstances alternative ways of collecting primary data may be used. But, whatever method of data collection is used, students must still be able to go through the full enquiry process and experience all the stages of investigation, as described in the specification.

The stages from the specification have been listed in the table below. Further advice and clarification has been provided in footnotes.

- Planning the enquiry, defining the aims, deciding on a location for study[1], setting up a hypothesis[2] or enquiry question[3] and considering the most appropriate methods of data collection[4].
- Researching the background to the enquiry from secondary sources[5], including the internet, before embarking on any data collection.
- Considering health and safety aspects of the enquiry[6].
- Collecting data, (from both primary and secondary sources) which must include some element of individual or group research[7] beyond the use of data provided by the teacher.
- Presenting data[8], using maps, graphs, photographs, field sketches, tables, quotations from interviews, etc as appropriate to the enquiry[9].

---

[1] The location should be focused on a small, clearly defined area or perhaps on more than one area, allowing comparative studies to be made.

[2] A hypothesis is a proposed explanation for something. The enquiry process should test this hypothesis. The conclusion of such an enquiry should try to prove or disprove the hypothesis by reference to evidence that has been collected and developed by the student. If it is not possible to completely prove or disprove it then the evidence should suggest the degree to which it can be accepted or rejected.

[3] An enquiry question is more open ended than a hypothesis. It states a geographical issue that can be examined from different points of view and allows the student to collect and analyse information that will help develop an understanding of the issue. Enquiry questions may lead to clear conclusions or they may lead to an open conclusion with evidence balanced between different points of view.

[4] There is no set number of data collection methods. Generally three or four is about right but students must make sure that:

- methods are relevant to their aims
- they are manageable in their individual circumstances and in the time available
- they are sufficiently challenging for A-level, and that they match the student's ability level
- they allow data to be presented and analysed using relevant techniques

[5] The text book that is being used will often be the main background source but those students aiming for the top grades may well research using a wider range of books and/or journals and/or discussion with people from relevant backgrounds.

[6] This will include considering aspects of weather and climate, traffic, possible suspicion or even hostility from local people, physical hazards such as slopes and fast flowing rivers, etc. The student's considerations of health and safety should be written up, concisely, as part of the study.

[7] Some students will plan to collect data on their own, in the field. This is fine, as long as the student's safety has been carefully considered. More often, students will collect data in pairs or groups so as to increase efficiency and to provide support and encouragement for each other. Sometimes these groups will be organised and supported by the teacher but other groups will plan and carry out their work without teacher guidance. Whichever method of data collection is used it is important that the data should be relevant to the enquiry, as accurate as possible and in a suitable form for use in the presentation and analysis stages of the enquiry.

Moreover, where a teacher-planned data collection exercise has taken place, opportunities for individuals to develop their data collection further should be provided. These opportunities could include

- collection of additional data during the visit
- collection of different forms of data, planned and carried out by the student as part of the group trip, designed to extend the study
- return visits to the site to collect data showing change through time
- visits to other sites to collect data for comparison with the site visited by the group.

In those few instances where students are not able to carry out data collection in the field they must be given the opportunity to collect data from other sources (such as books, journals, company reports, newspapers, library resource centres, estate agent literature, meteorological records, river flow records, interviews with relevant people carried out at home or in the classroom, etc) which are in as raw and unprocessed state as possible. Again this data collection should be accurate and relevant and suitable for further processing and analysis by the student.

All data collection involves sampling. Students must be aware of different possible sampling methods and should be able to explain how and why they chose the sample(s) that they collected.

[8] Whilst the data collection might be carried out in groups all that follows must be done independently. The data presentation and analysis and the drawing of conclusions must be the individual, unaided work of each student.

- Analysing the data, using statistical techniques where appropriate[10].
- Drawing conclusions, with reference back to the aims of the enquiry, and showing how the student has developed an increased understanding of the place studied and of the geographical ideas forming the basis of the study.
- Presenting a bibliography, listing sources consulted at the beginning of the enquiry and all sources of data used to supplement the data collected by the student[11].
- Evaluating all stages of the enquiry process and suggesting how the enquiry could have been improved[12].
- Considering how the enquiry could be used and/or taken forward in the future[13].

---

[9] As with data collection techniques, students should aim to include at least three or four data presentation techniques in their completed enquiries. The better students should aim to show their abilities by attempting more complex techniques while the weaker students should aim to show mastery of some more basic techniques. All students should avoid over-reliance on one technique used repeatedly) but they should also be aware that some repetition of a technique is invaluable when places or processes have to be directly compared with each other.
All presentation techniques should be clearly titled, with a key when necessary, and clearly referenced in the text.
Maps, graphs etc can be drawn by hand or using computer software programs. Where programs are used they should be acknowledged in the bibliography.

[10] Statistical techniques could range from the simple calculation of averages (mean, median and/or mode), measurement of dispersion (range, quartile distribution, standard deviation, etc), correlation (especially the use of Spearman rank correlation), chi square analysis, etc.
Students must be aware that their calculation of results is important but the explanation of the significance of those results is the most important part of their statistical analysis.
Calculations can be done by hand or using computer software programs. Where programs are used they too should be acknowledged in the bibliography.

[11] Although this will probably appear at the end of the finished enquiry students should be aware that they should start to keep their records for the bibliography right from the outset of the enquiry process. They should be aware that failure to keep full records of their sources as they are using them will lead to the loss of important details and will make reference back to previous sources much more difficult and time-consuming.

[12] This gives all students an opportunity to show how well they have understood the work that they have been carrying out. Such critical understanding can be a valuable way of accessing higher marks.

[13] Here too real understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of their work can be shown. It provides an opportunity for students to show awareness of the way that the research community works. Of course they are just approaching the first stages in the research process but anyone hopping to go on to further study can start to develop their thinking about research methods here.

GET HELP AND SUPPORT

Visit our website for information, guidance, support and resources at **oxfordaqaexams.org.uk**

You can contact the geography team directly;

E: **geography@oxfordaqaexams.org.uk**

OXFORD INTERNATIONAL AQA EXAMINATIONS
LINACRE HOUSE, JORDAN HILL, OXFORD, OX2 8TA
UNITED KINGDOM

enquiries@oxfordaqaexams.org.uk
oxfordaqaexams.org.uk