



National  
Qualifications

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# Geography

## Assignment

### Assessment task

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This is the assessment task for the assignment Component of National 5 Geography Course assessment.

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# Introduction

This is the assessment task for National 5 Geography assignment.

This assignment is worth 20 marks out of the total of 80 marks. This is 25% of the overall marks for the Course assessment. The Course will be graded A-D.

Marks for all Course Components are added up to give a total Course assessment mark which is then used as the basis for grading decisions.

This is one of two Components of Course assessment. The other Component is a question paper.

This document gives marking instructions for assessors for the assignment Component of this Course and instructions for candidates.

The assessment task will be set and externally marked by SQA and conducted in centres under the conditions specified by SQA.

The assessment instructions for candidates are provided in Appendix 1 and must be detached and given to the candidate.

## Equality and inclusion

This Course assessment has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to assessment. Assessments have been designed to promote equal opportunities while maintaining the integrity of the qualification.

For guidance on assessment arrangements for disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs, please follow the link to the assessment arrangements web page: [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html)

# Marking instructions

## Part One: General marking principles for National 5 Geography assignment

*This information is provided to help you understand the general principles that will be applied when marking candidate responses in this assignment. These principles are reflected in the detailed marking instructions that will be used to mark the assignment.*

- a) Marks for each candidate response will always be assigned in line with these general marking principles and the detailed marking instructions.
- b) Marking should always be positive, ie marks should be awarded for what is correct and not deducted for errors or omissions.
- c) Principal Assessors will provide guidance on marking specific candidate responses which are not covered by either the principles or detailed marking instructions.

In presenting their findings, candidates should show the following skills, knowledge and understanding:

### **A Describing two research methods used to collect information about the topic or issue**

- ◆ Candidates may be credited in a number of ways up to a maximum of 6 marks.
- ◆ Award a maximum of 4 marks for any one method.
- ◆ For full marks, reference must be made to two research methods.

### **B Describing and explaining, with reference to Processed Information, findings about the topic or issue and reaching a well-supported conclusion**

- ◆ Candidates can be credited in a number of ways up to a maximum of 14 marks.
- ◆ A maximum of 3 marks may be awarded for description with remaining marks being awarded for valid explanatory and concluding points.
- ◆ A candidate may achieve all 14 marks for explanatory and concluding remarks
- ◆ Processed Information is evidence that candidates have gathered during the research phase of the assignment. If they do not make reference to this Processed Information in their descriptions and explanations, or if no Processed Information is included, they can only achieve up to a maximum of 10 marks for Section B.
- ◆ Marks should be awarded according to the level of detail given, the quality of the description and explanation about the main findings, and references to the Processed Information used during the assessment.
- ◆ Marks should not be awarded for direct copying from the Processed Information.
- ◆ Marks should be awarded for detailed interpretation, explanation and analysis of their main findings.

### **Specified resources to be taken into assessment**

Candidates should take Processed Information collected during the research phase of the assignment into the production of evidence stage.

This Processed Information should consist of no more than two single-sided sheets of A4. Candidates should process, annotate, or highlight this Processed Information, during the research stage and before the production of evidence stage. This Processed Information must be submitted to SQA along with the candidate evidence. The candidate evidence is produced under a high degree of supervision on a Geography report template or on paper.

The nature of the Processed Information taken into the assessment should show evidence of primary or secondary research carried out by the candidate. Candidates should process this information prior to the controlled assessment. This Processed Information may include, for example: evidence gathered during fieldwork; statistical, graphical or numerical data; survey results; information gathered from interviews and questionnaires; a list of internet search engine results; a newspaper article or extracts; notes taken from a visit or talk; notes taken from a written or audio visual source.

Candidates may be advised by assessors as to information which would be appropriate for the assignment at this SCQF level.

While no marks are awarded for the Processed Information, candidates must make reference to the results of their research contained in this Processed Information in the descriptions and explanations of their research findings. Otherwise they will not be able to achieve full marks.

Part Two: Detailed marking instructions

| These detailed marking instructions provide the basis on which the marking principles should be applied. |   |  |          |  |
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|  |   | General marking instructions   | Max mark | Supported commentary   |
| 1  | A | <p>Describing two research methods used to collect information about the topic or issue.</p> <p>If three research methods are mentioned, mark all three and award marks for the highest two.</p> | 6        | <p>Candidates can be credited in a number of ways up to a maximum of 6 marks.</p> <p><b>Describing research methods used</b></p> <p>For full marks, candidates must describe two research methods. Up to 4 marks available for any one research method. Marks awarded depending on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ appropriateness of research method</li> <li>◆ level of detail and development</li> </ul> <p><i>I carried out a traffic survey, (1 mark, technique), as I was researching ways of improving the central shopping area in the town (1 mark). It was done at various points along Main Street at different times of day (1 mark) in order to find out when the traffic was heavy and when it was quiet (1 mark).</i></p> <p><i>I also interviewed pedestrians (1 mark, technique) on Main Street to find out their views about traffic problems and their solutions (1 mark). I asked them questions like were they concerned about traffic on Main Street (1 mark). To make my results better I could ask more people to get a wider range of solutions (1 mark).</i></p> <p>Of the marks available for describing research methods, this answer achieved 2 marks for identifying the techniques used and a possible further 6 marks for describing how the techniques were used. As there is a maximum of 6 marks for this section, the candidate received full marks.</p> |

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| 1 | B | <p>Describing and explaining, with reference to Processed Information, findings about the topic or issue</p> <p>Reaching a well-supported conclusion about the topic or issue</p> | 14 | <p><i>Candidates can be credited in a number of ways up to a maximum of 14 marks but no marks should be awarded for straight lifts from the Processed Information. A maximum of 3 marks may be awarded for description, with remaining marks being awarded for valid explanatory and concluding points. A candidate may achieve all 14 marks for explanatory and concluding remarks.</i></p> <p><b>Describing and explaining main findings with reference to Processed Information and reaching a well-supported conclusion.</b></p> <p>For full marks, candidates must make reference to Processed Information, otherwise mark out of 10. No marks for direct copying from Processed Information. Marks should be awarded according to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ level of detail and development of descriptions and explanations about main findings</li> <li>◆ how effectively Processed Information is used</li> <li>◆ accuracy and quality of explanations and analysis in concluding statements</li> <li>◆ conclusion is supported by Processed Information</li> <li>◆ how clearly concluding remarks are linked to findings</li> </ul> <p><i>The number of vehicles on Main Street is different at different times of the day (1 description mark).</i></p> <p><i>Diagram A shows that the highest traffic flow was between 5pm and 6pm (1 description mark) while the quietest time during the day was between 9 and 10am (1 description mark); traffic flows varied between 250 vehicles per hour down to just 75 vehicles per hour (1 description mark)</i></p> <p><i>The interviews with pedestrians (Diagram B) showed that nearly all of them (96%) were concerned about traffic levels on Main Street (1 description mark) while over 75% said that they were worried about air pollution levels (1 description mark); the majority of pedestrians (58%) said that they used public transport to get into the centre (1 description mark) while 34% drove into the centre (1 description mark). Only a quarter of the people</i></p> |
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|  |  |  | <p><i>who drove into the centre said that they would be prepared to use public transport instead (1 description mark). Only 2% of people interviewed cycled into the centre (1 description mark) and nearly all of them said that they were worried about road safety (1 description mark) which may be due to the traffic levels (1 explanation mark). Over half of the people interviewed said that they thought Main Street should be pedestrianised (1 description mark) while 36% said that they thought it should be restricted to buses and bicycles only (1 description mark).</i></p> <p><i>Interview results showed that many people think that the Council should do something to improve the situation (1 description mark); I think that the most popular solution according to the survey, pedestrianisation (repeat point), should happen as soon as possible as it would help to make Main Street safer (1 explanation mark).</i></p> <p><i>The busiest time on Main Street is between 5pm and 6pm (repeat point). This is likely to be because people are heading home from work during this time (1 explanation mark). This time corresponded with the highest number of vehicles recorded in the survey as it is the main route from the CBD (1 explanation mark). The quietest time in Main Street is between 9 and 10am (repeat point) because most people are at work by this time. (1 explanation mark).</i></p> <p>This part of the script achieved 14 marks for description, 5 marks for explanation. There is a maximum of only 3 descriptive points to be allocated in this section therefore this candidate would score 8 marks for part B.</p> <p>Total mark: 14/20</p> |
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# Appendix 1: Instructions for candidates

This assessment applies to the assignment for National 5 Geography.

## Geography assignment

The purpose of this assignment is to demonstrate your ability to apply your skills and knowledge and understanding to research a geographical topic or issue of your choice. This may be related to areas you have studied in class if you wish, but you are free to research any topic or issue.

This assignment is worth 20 marks out of the total of 80 marks. This is 25% of the overall marks for the Course assessment. The Course will be graded A-D.

In order to complete this assignment you will:

- ◆ choose, with minimum support, an appropriate geographical topic or issue
- ◆ collect information from a limited range of sources of information
- ◆ process the information gathered, using geographical skills/techniques
- ◆ draw on knowledge and understanding to explain and analyse key features of the topic or issue
- ◆ reach a well-supported conclusion, supported by evidence about the topic or issue studied

The assessment for the assignment will be in the form of a report of your research and findings. You must complete this report within one hour.

You must complete your report on an assignment report sheet. You will take Processed Information, collected during your research, into the assessment and you should refer to this information in your assessment. This Processed Information should be no more than two single-sides of A4 paper. You will submit this research evidence along with your assignment report to SQA for marking.

Your assessor will let you know how the assessment will be carried out and any required conditions for doing it.

# Geography assignment

In this assessment you will:

**Choose a suitable geographical topic or issue**

**How you can do this**

The geographical topic or issue you choose should allow you to:

- ◆ carry out research on a geographical issue
- ◆ gather information in two different ways

You will have a very wide choice of possible topics to research. You can research something you have studied in class or a topic or issue about which you are personally interested in finding out more. It can be local or based on something further afield.

Good topics for research will allow you to gather data or information which you can then process. This will allow you to reach your own original conclusions based on your findings. It will be easier to write a good report on a topic which has generated clear results, so that you can comment on and explain these findings rather than just making descriptive points.

It would be helpful if you have a very clear idea of what you are trying to find out. This might take the form of a research question or questions or statement(s) which you try to prove or disprove.

Your assessor may support you by commenting upon the suitability of your chosen topic or issue and advise you on the likely availability of relevant resources.

# Geography assignment

In this assessment you will:

## Collect information from at least two sources

### How you can do this

Once you are clear about the topic or issue you are going to research, you can begin to collect information. You must use at least two different methods of collecting information. These could be from primary sources (ie original information you have gathered yourself) or from secondary sources such as maps, websites, books or journals. It is vital that you keep a note of all the sources you use.

Examples of primary sources:

- ◆ surveys
- ◆ questionnaires/interviews
- ◆ letters/e-mails
- ◆ field sketches/field trips
- ◆ measurements (eg weather or river flow data)

Examples of secondary sources:

- ◆ maps
- ◆ websites
- ◆ newspapers/magazines/books
- ◆ television programmes/video/DVD/digital streaming
- ◆ radio/podcasts

# Geography assignment

In this assessment you will:

**Use geographical skills/techniques to process the information you have gathered**

**How you can do this**

Once you have gathered your information you should use your geographical skills/techniques to process your findings. This might involve the use of a variety of different techniques depending on the nature of your research. Your results could be displayed in the form of a table(s)/graph(s)/annotated field sketch(s)/pie chart(s)/land use map(s)/annotated cross-section(s) or photographs, or any combination of these.

At this stage it is important to consider which of these results (Processed Information) you are going to take into the assessment. You should take two different examples of results you have gathered. Whatever you decide to do, you must be able to fit your chosen information on to two single-sided sheets of A4. It is important that this Processed Information is clearly labelled, as it will be submitted as part of the assessment (although the Processed Information itself will not be marked). See additional advice below.

# Geography assignment

In this assessment you will:

**Describe and explain the main findings of your research**

**How you can do this**

You must describe and explain clearly the main things you have found as a result of carrying out your research.

If your research has been thorough, the results of your assignment should be clear to you and it is your task to convey these as clearly as possible. To gain full marks, it is necessary to refer to the Processed Information which you have taken into the assessment (although you should not just copy chunks of data from this). You could quote selected information/ facts/ statistics from your Processed Information in order to convey your main findings. Your description and explanation of the main findings should link clearly to the issue or topic you have researched.

# Geography assignment

In this assessment you will:

**Give a conclusion based on your geographical knowledge and the evidence gathered during your research**

**How you can do this**

The final part of your assignment is to come to a conclusion about the topic or issue which you have been researching.

This should involve interpreting or highlighting the main results of your research by making judgements linked to your findings. For example you could:

- ◆ make a decision or recommendation about your topic or issue
- ◆ explain the most important things you found out in your research
- ◆ provide answers to the question or questions you set yourself at the start of your research
- ◆ say whether or not the statement you started with has been proved or disproved

## Additional advice and guidance

### Processed Information

You are able to take Processed Information you have collected during the research stage of the assignment, into your assessment. This must fit on to two single-sides of A4. You should refer to this Processed Information to support your report but you should not copy large chunks from it. It is what you do with the evidence that is important.

The evidence that you will take in should show information you have gathered from two different sources.

Some examples of the sort of Processed Information you can take in are:

- ◆ an annotated photograph(s) or field sketch(s)
- ◆ an annotated cross-section or land use map
- ◆ a table(s) or graph(s) showing figures about your topic or issue
- ◆ an example of a questionnaire you used to survey shoppers about traffic problems, together with details of the number of people surveyed
- ◆ a letter, with questions, you sent to the local council planning department
- ◆ a reply you received in response to your letter with key information highlighted
- ◆ a screenshot of a list of websites you found using a search engine with the most relevant ones highlighted
- ◆ a newspaper article with key points underlined
- ◆ a copy of notes you made from watching a video/TV programme/DVD relevant to your topic or issue
- ◆ field notes made on location

It is important that the evidence you bring into the assignment has been processed by you (ie you have made it unique and have not just photocopied findings from a secondary source without at least annotating them in some way).

### Working with others

While you should choose your own topic to research, others in your class may have chosen a similar topic. It might be helpful to work part of the time with others when you are collecting information.

If this is the case it is important that you are able to show what you have contributed to this part of your assignment, and that the Processed Information you take into the assessment is your own work.

## National 5 Geography assignment – report

The following template is indicative of the space required for candidate responses. Centres may amend this template as required.

State the topic or issue which you have researched

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**Research methods:**

**6 marks**

Describe **two** research methods you used to collect information about your topic or issue.

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**Conclusions:**

**14 marks**

For this section you must:

- (i) Describe and explain, in detail, the main findings of your research. You must include reference to the Processed Information you have brought into the assessment.
- (ii) State what conclusions you have reached about your topic or issue.

## Administrative information

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### History of changes

| Version | Description of change  | Authorised by          | Date           |
|---------|--|------------------------|----------------|
| 1.1     | Clarification of marking instructions; removal of requirement for fieldwork and/or maps. | Qualifications Manager | September 2014 |
| 1.2     | Marking instructions amended.  | Qualifications Manager | September 2015 |
| 1.3     | Marking instructions amended.  | Qualifications Manager | September 2016 |
|         |  |                        |                |

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