



Advanced Higher
Coursework
Assessment Task



Advanced Higher Geography

Project–folio: geographical study and geographical issue

Assessment task

This document provides information for teachers and lecturers about the coursework component of this course in terms of the skills, knowledge and understanding that are assessed. It **must** be read in conjunction with the course specification.

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Introduction

This document contains marking instructions and instructions for candidates for the Advanced Higher Geography project–folio. You must read it in conjunction with the course specification.

The project–folio is worth 100 marks. This is 67% of the overall marks for the course assessment.

The project–folio comprises two out of three course assessment components:

Geographical study has 60 marks.

Geographical issue has 40 marks.

The other component is a question paper.

Marking instructions

In line with SQA's normal practice, the following marking instructions for the Advanced Higher Geography project–folio are addressed to the marker. They are also helpful for those preparing candidates for course assessment.

Candidates' evidence is submitted to SQA for external marking.

General marking principles

Always apply these general principles. Use them in conjunction with the detailed marking instructions, which identify the key features required in candidates' responses.

- a Always use positive marking. This means candidates accumulate marks for the demonstration of relevant skills, knowledge and understanding; marks are not deducted for errors or omissions.
- b If a candidate response does not seem to be covered by either the principles or detailed marking instructions, and you are uncertain how to assess it, you must seek guidance from your team leader.
- c Candidates can structure their project–folio in a variety of ways, and may also demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding in a variety of ways and at different points in their project–folio. Award marks for relevant and appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding demonstrated in the project–folio evidence.
- d The word count for the completed geographical study should be no more than 3,000 words (excluding any text used on front covers, list of contents, annotations to any illustrations, references, bibliography and appendices). Candidates must submit the word count with the completed geographical study. If the word count for the geographical study exceeds the maximum by more than 10%, mark as normal, and raise a 'word count exceeded' exception. Do not apply a penalty.
- e The word count for the completed geographical issue should be no more than 1,800 words (excluding any text used on front covers, list of contents, annotations to any illustrations, references, bibliography and appendices). Candidates must submit the word count with the completed geographical issue. If the word count for the geographical issue exceeds the maximum by more than 10%, mark as normal, and raise a 'word count exceeded' exception. Do not apply a penalty.

Detailed marking instructions

These detailed marking instructions provide guidance on how to apply the general marking principles. Where the marking instructions describe a range of marks, use the range of marks available. Award candidates the full marks in the range where they fully meet the descriptor. Where candidates only partially meet the descriptor, award a lower mark.

Geographical study

| | General marking principles | Max mark | Additional guidance |
|---|--|----------|--|
| A | Justify the choice of a complex geographical topic to research | 4 | <p>Candidates can gain up to a maximum of 4 marks.</p> <p>In the justification, the candidate includes information relating to:</p> <p>3-4 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ the purpose of researching the topic ◆ the relevance of the topic in the context of the subject, or why the topic is worth learning about ◆ explicit reference to relevant geographical literature and/or research to set the topic in context <p>1-2 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ the purpose of researching the topic ◆ the relevance of the topic in the context of the subject, or why the topic is worth learning about <p>0 marks</p> <p>Candidate does not provide any evidence that justifies their choice.</p> |

| | General marking principles | Max mark | Additional guidance |
|---|---|----------|--|
| B | Plan and carry out detailed research, which could include fieldwork | 10 | <p>Candidates can gain up to a maximum of 10 marks, for which they should provide evidence that they have planned in detail and used a wide range of techniques and sources of information.</p> <p>Research can, but does not have to, include fieldwork. Where appropriate, candidates can gain full marks for the project–folio without carrying out fieldwork.</p> <p>8-10 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Candidate provides clear and explicit evidence of detailed planning for research that allows generation of relevant and detailed research questions, hypotheses or sub-aims. ◆ Candidate supports their evidence by using relevant sources of information to produce sufficient data to support detailed analysis. ◆ Candidate skilfully uses research techniques that are appropriate to gather data that allows relationships to be identified. <p>5-7 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Candidate provides reasonable evidence of planning for research that allows generation of relevant research questions, hypotheses or sub-aims. ◆ Candidate supports their evidence by using relevant sources of information to produce sufficient data to support reasonable analysis. ◆ Candidate provides reasonable evidence of using appropriate research techniques to gather data that is relevant, and allow the research questions, hypotheses or sub-aims to be investigated. <p>1-4 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Candidate provides limited evidence of planning for research. ◆ Candidate supports their evidence by using relevant sources of information to produce sufficient data to support limited analysis. ◆ Candidate provides limited evidence of using appropriate research techniques to gather data. <p>0 marks Candidate does not provide any evidence of planning for research.</p> |

| | General marking principles | Max mark | Additional guidance |
|---|---|----------|---|
| C | Evaluate the research techniques and the reliability of data gathered | 8 | <p>Candidates can gain up to a maximum of 8 marks, for which they should make reasoned evaluative comments relating to, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ relevance, importance or reliability of gathered data ◆ strengths and weaknesses of techniques used ◆ any other relevant evaluative comment <p>7-8 marks Candidate makes clear and explicit evaluative comment(s) on the research techniques and the relevance and/or reliability of the data gathered, including reasoned comments relating to next steps.</p> <p>4-6 marks Candidate makes reasonable evaluative comment(s) on the research techniques and/or the relevance and reliability of the data gathered and/or limited comments relating to next steps.</p> <p>1-3 marks Candidate makes limited or implicit evaluative comment(s) on the research techniques and/or the relevance and reliability of the data gathered.</p> <p>0 marks Candidate does not provide any evidence of evaluation.</p> |

| | General marking principles | Max mark | Additional guidance |
|---|--|----------|---|
| D | Demonstrate a detailed knowledge and understanding of the topic being studied from wider reading | 8 | <p>Candidates can gain up to a maximum of 8 marks.</p> <p>Knowledge and understanding evidence could be information that is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ relevant to the topic being studied ◆ developed (by, for example, including additional detail, exemplification, reasons or evidence related to the topic being studied) ◆ used to support the findings from research relevant to the topic being studied <p>7-8 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Candidate includes clear and explicit evidence from relevant wider reading. ◆ Candidate then uses the evidence to support the findings from research. ◆ Candidate uses the evidence to provide evaluation, analysis, or to support a line of argument. <p>4-6 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Candidate includes reasonable evidence from relevant wider reading. ◆ Candidate then uses the evidence to support the findings from research. <p>1-3 marks</p> <p>Candidate includes limited or implicit evidence from relevant wider reading.</p> <p>0 marks</p> <p>Candidate does not provide any evidence of wider reading.</p> |

| | General marking principles | Max mark | Additional guidance |
|---|--|----------|---|
| E | Use a wide range of appropriate techniques to process the gathered information | 10 | <p>Candidates can gain up to a maximum of 10 marks, for which they should show that they have used a wide range of appropriate techniques to process the gathered information.</p> <p>8-10 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Candidate uses a wide range of valid techniques to process the gathered information or data appropriately. ◆ Candidate skilfully integrates the techniques and their products to support their research. <p>5-7 marks Candidate uses a reasonable range of valid techniques to process the gathered information or data appropriately.</p> <p>1-4 marks Candidate uses a limited range of techniques to process the gathered information or data appropriately.</p> <p>0 marks Candidate does not provide any evidence of any processing technique.</p> |

| | General marking principles | Max mark | Additional guidance |
|---|--|----------|---|
| F | Analyse all the information that has been gathered and processed to identify and explain relationships | 12 | <p>Candidates can gain up to a maximum of 12 marks.</p> <p>Analytical points could include, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ links and/or relationships between the different data sets that have been gathered and processed ◆ links and/or relationships between the different data sets and the wider context of the study ◆ similarities and/or contradictions between the data sets and related theories <p>11-12 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Candidate identifies and gives clear and explicit explanation(s) of relationships identified from the information or data gathered. ◆ Candidate reflects on the research questions, hypotheses or sub-aims of the study. <p>8-10 marks</p> <p>Candidate identifies and gives reasonable explanation(s) of relationships identified from the information or data gathered and processed.</p> <p>5-7 marks</p> <p>Candidate identifies and gives limited explanation(s) of relationships identified from the information or data gathered and processed.</p> <p>1-4 marks</p> <p>Candidate identifies and/or describes relationships, which may be simplistic, from the information or data gathered and processed.</p> <p>0 marks</p> <p>Candidate does not provide any evidence of analysis or analysis is irrelevant.</p> |

| | General marking principles | Max mark | Additional guidance |
|---|--|----------|--|
| G | Reach reasoned conclusion(s) supported by a wide range of evidence | 8 | <p>Candidates can gain up to a maximum of 8 marks, for which they summarise the key elements of the study, supported by a wide range of evidence, and may include an overall judgement. Award marks for the conclusion(s) wherever it appears in the study; it does not need to come at the end.</p> <p>7-8 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Candidate provides a valid conclusion(s) supported by a wide range of evidence from the gathered and processed information or data. ◆ Candidate clearly goes beyond a repetition of the analysis. ◆ Conclusion(s) show some insight into the data and/or the topic chosen. <p>4-6 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Candidate provides a valid conclusion(s) supported by a reasonable range of evidence from the gathered and processed information or data. ◆ Candidate attempts to go beyond a repetition of the analysis. <p>1-3 marks</p> <p>Candidate provides a conclusion(s) supported by a limited range of evidence from the gathered and processed information or data.</p> <p>0 marks</p> <p>Candidate does not provide a conclusion.</p> |

Geographical issue

| | General marking principles | Max mark | Additional guidance |
|---|---|----------|--|
| A | Justify the choice of a current complex geographical issue to critically evaluate | 4 | <p>Candidates can gain up to a maximum of 4 marks.</p> <p>In the justification, the candidate includes information relating to:</p> <p>3-4 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ the purpose of critically evaluating the issue ◆ the relevance of the issue in the wider context of the subject, and/or why the issue is worth researching ◆ explicit reference to relevant geographical literature and/or research to set the topic in context <p>1-2 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ the purpose of critically evaluating the issue ◆ the relevance of the issue in the wider context of the subject, and/or why the issue is worth researching <p>0 marks</p> <p>Candidate does not provide any evidence that justifies their choice.</p> |

| | General marking principles | Max mark | Additional guidance |
|---|--|----------|--|
| B | Undertake wider background reading from a wide range of sources relating to the geographical issue | 8 | <p>Candidates can gain up to a maximum of 8 marks, for which they should show evidence of using a range of sources of information. Sources should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ be current and up to date ◆ be relevant to the issue ◆ contain intellectual substance ◆ provide a range of viewpoints ◆ be listed in a bibliography <p>7-8 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Candidate uses relevant sources that provide a detailed review of the issue, with a wide range of viewpoints. ◆ Candidate includes explicit evidence of background reading and/or research. ◆ Candidate may have prioritised viewpoints and sources for use in their response. <p>4-6 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Candidate uses relevant sources that provide a reasonable review of the issue, with a range of viewpoints. ◆ Candidate includes evidence of background reading and/or research. <p>1-3 marks</p> <p>Candidate uses relevant sources that provide a limited review of the issue, with a range of viewpoints.</p> <p>0 marks</p> <p>Candidate does not provide any evidence of using sources, or sources used are not relevant to the issue.</p> |

| | General marking principles | Max mark | Additional guidance |
|---|--|----------|--|
| C | Summarise a wide range of viewpoints on the complex geographical issue | 10 | <p>Candidates can gain up to a maximum of 10 marks, for which they should show that they have identified and understood the key information within the sources or viewpoints.</p> <p>8-10 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Candidate summarises a wide range of viewpoints to outline the issue. ◆ Candidate demonstrates an insightful understanding of the issue. ◆ Candidate organises information systematically or very effectively and may include citations, where appropriate. ◆ Candidate includes relevant maps and/or diagrams to enhance text, where appropriate. <p>5-7 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Candidate summarises a reasonable range of viewpoints to outline the issue. ◆ Candidate demonstrates a reasonable degree of understanding of the issue. ◆ Candidate organises information effectively and may include citations, where appropriate. ◆ Candidate includes relevant maps and/or diagrams to enhance the text, where appropriate. <p>1-4 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Candidate summarises a limited range of viewpoints to outline the issue. ◆ Candidate demonstrates a limited degree of understanding of the issue. <p>0 marks Candidate does not summarise viewpoints.</p> |

| | General marking principles | Max mark | Additional guidance |
|---|--|----------|--|
| D | Critically evaluate each of the viewpoints | 10 | <p>Candidates can gain up to a maximum of 10 marks, for which they should make reasoned evaluative comments on the sources and viewpoints by referring to, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ relevance, significance, reliability, and credibility of the content including the text, quality of maps and/or diagrams, and statistics ◆ strengths and weaknesses of the content including the text, quality of maps and/or diagrams, and statistics ◆ comparisons between different viewpoints ◆ any other relevant evaluative comments <p>8-10 marks Candidate makes explicit and insightful evaluative comments. The evaluation may include, where appropriate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ assessing the credibility of the author and the publication ◆ assessing the quality of maps and/or diagrams, and statistics contained within the sources ◆ identification of bias and/or exaggeration ◆ comparing and contrasting the viewpoints ◆ giving examples from wider reading to support evaluative comments <p>5-7 marks Candidate makes reasonable evaluative comments. The evaluation may include, where appropriate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ assessing the credibility of the author and the publication ◆ assessing the quality of maps and/or diagrams, and statistics contained within the sources ◆ identification of bias and/or exaggeration ◆ comparing and contrasting viewpoints |

| | General marking principles | Max mark | Additional guidance |
|---|--|----------|---|
| | | | <p>1-4 marks Candidate makes limited evaluative comments on the viewpoints. The evaluation includes, where appropriate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ assessing the credibility of the author and the publication ◆ assessing the quality of maps and/or diagrams, and statistics contained within the sources <p>0 marks Candidate does not provide any evidence of evaluation.</p> |
| E | Reach reasoned conclusion(s) supported by a wide range of evidence | 8 | <p>Candidates can gain up to a maximum of 8 marks, for which they should summarise the key elements of the issue, supported by a wide range of evidence, and may include an overall judgement. Award marks for the conclusion(s) wherever it appears in the issue; it does not need to come at the end.</p> <p>7-8 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Candidate provides detailed conclusion(s) supported by a wide range of information and/or evidence. ◆ Conclusion(s) show some insight into the topic chosen. <p>4-6 marks Candidate provides reasonable conclusion(s) supported by a reasonable range of information and/or evidence.</p> <p>1-3 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Candidate provides limited conclusion(s). ◆ Conclusion(s) is supported by a limited range of evidence. <p>0 marks Candidate does not provide a conclusion.</p> |

Instructions for candidates

This assessment applies to the project–folio for Advanced Higher Geography.

The project–folio is worth 100 marks. This is 67% of the overall marks for the course assessment.

It assesses the following skills, knowledge and understanding:

- ◆ independent research and/or fieldwork
- ◆ applying a wide range of geographical methods and techniques
- ◆ integrating a wide range of geographical skills
- ◆ critically evaluating a current complex geographical issue using a wide range of sources and viewpoints

The project–folio gives you an opportunity to develop your knowledge and understanding of Geography at Advanced Higher level and to apply this knowledge and understanding to a study and issue of interest to you.

The project–folio encourages you to develop as an independent learner and to develop transferable skills which will be useful to you in future study or work. Among those skills are problem solving, research, critical evaluation and presentation.

Research for your geographical study and geographical issue may relate to topics you have previously studied or you may choose to research any appropriate study and issue. A successful project–folio is likely to be about a topic in which you have a genuine interest.

Your teacher or lecturer will let you know if there are any specific conditions for doing this assessment.

Geographical study

In this assessment, you have to:

- ◆ justify the choice of a complex geographical topic to research (4 marks)
- ◆ plan and carry out detailed research, which could include fieldwork (10 marks)
- ◆ evaluate the research techniques and the reliability of data gathered (8 marks)
- ◆ demonstrate a detailed knowledge and understanding of the topic being studied from wider reading (8 marks)
- ◆ use a wide range of appropriate techniques to process the gathered information (10 marks)
- ◆ analyse all the information that has been gathered and processed to identify and explain relationships (12 marks)
- ◆ reach reasoned conclusion(s) supported by a wide range of evidence (8 marks)

The geographical study is worth 60 marks.

Your geographical study should demonstrate that you have met these criteria. You do not have to demonstrate them in the same order they are listed above. For example, your conclusion(s) could, but does not need to, come at the end of your writing.

Your completed geographical study should be no more than 3,000 words (excluding any text used on front covers, list of contents, annotations to any illustrations, references, bibliography and appendices). You **must** submit the word count with your completed geographical study. If the word count exceeds the maximum by more than 10%, a penalty is applied.

Geographical issue

In this assessment, you have to:

- ◆ justify the choice of a current complex geographical issue to critically evaluate (4 marks)
- ◆ undertake wider background reading from a wide range of sources relating to the geographical issue (8 marks)
- ◆ summarise a wide range of viewpoints on the complex geographical issue (10 marks)
- ◆ critically evaluate each of the viewpoints (10 marks)
- ◆ reach reasoned conclusion(s) supported by a wide range of evidence (8 marks)

The geographical issue is worth 40 marks.

Your geographical issue should demonstrate that you have met these criteria. You do not have to demonstrate them in the same order they are listed above. For example, your conclusion(s) could, but does not need to, come at the end of your writing.

Your completed geographical issue should be no more than 1,800 words (excluding any text used on front covers, list of contents, annotations to any illustrations, references, bibliography and appendices). You **must** submit the word count with your completed geographical issue. If the word count exceeds the maximum by more than 10%, a penalty is applied.

Project–folio: geographical study and geographical issue

The following information helps you understand the requirements of the project–folio.

Choosing a geographical study and a geographical issue

Your choice of study and issue must allow you to meet the requirements of the project–folio. A complex study and issue will require detailed research, analysis, evaluation and reasoned conclusions.

When formulating your ideas you may also wish to consider the following questions:

- ◆ Do you have access to any necessary expertise, resources and equipment?
- ◆ Can you overcome all potential barriers, for example health and safety issues, permissions, or logistics?
- ◆ Will you be able to complete the project–folio in the time available?

If you answer ‘no’ to any of the above questions, you may need to reconsider your project–folio geographical study and/or geographical issue.

Your teacher or lecturer may support you by commenting on the suitability of your chosen study and issue, and can advise on the likely availability of resources.

Researching the geographical study and geographical issue

You should gather information relevant to your study and issue from a wide range of sources of information. This means you should use a number of sources of information to support or highlight analytical or evaluative points. You can gain marks for the accuracy of your references and for using these to support your line of argument.

Primary research

This is information which you gather yourself using one or more of the recognised physical or human gathering techniques. When carrying out primary research it is important that you:

- ◆ prepare appropriate questions in advance
- ◆ have a clear purpose for any visits
- ◆ are aware of any confidentiality or copyright issues and obtain appropriate permissions
- ◆ comply with good practice in terms of research ethics

Secondary research

This is information that you gather from research already done and includes information from, for example, online sources, publications, specialist organisations, learned bodies, and different types of media. You should critically evaluate all information that you access and check, for example authority and/or accuracy.

When writing up your research you should make clear, accurate and direct reference to the sources of information so that the marker knows where your information comes from. To help you do this, you should:

- ◆ use 'quotation marks' around any text that has come from other sources
- ◆ acknowledge the sources of diagrams, illustrations and images
- ◆ write a bibliography (a list of all sources)
- ◆ use a recognised referencing system, for example the Harvard referencing system

Remember that plagiarism (passing off other people's work and ideas as your own) is cheating. This includes copying passages from the internet and not acknowledging the source. It is also plagiarism if:

- ◆ all or some of your project–folio has been produced by someone else
- ◆ you've copied it from a book, an internet site or an essay bank without referencing

Markers can easily spot plagiarism. If plagiarism is detected you will lose marks. It may result in your qualifications being revoked.

Geographical study

A Justify the choice of a complex geographical topic to research (4 marks)

You should choose a topic that allows you to:

- ◆ carry out wide-ranging research using primary and/or secondary sources, where appropriate, to gather relevant data, related to research questions
- ◆ summarise and process geographical data and/or information
- ◆ analyse and evaluate geographical data and/or information
- ◆ reach reasoned conclusions

You should justify your choice of topic by:

- ◆ explaining the purpose of researching the topic
- ◆ explaining the relevance of the topic in the context of the subject and/or why the topic is worth learning about
- ◆ making explicit reference to any relevant geographical literature and/or research to set the topic in context

B Plan and carry out detailed research, which could include fieldwork (10 marks)

You should:

- ◆ carry out extensive background reading on the topic you have chosen
- ◆ generate at least four research questions, sub-aims or hypotheses related to the overall aim of your study, and organise them logically
- ◆ identify appropriate sampling techniques and sampling points for gathering data, where appropriate
- ◆ identify a range of data-gathering methods and techniques and equipment, where appropriate, which will allow the research questions, sub-aims or hypotheses to be explored

You should show that you have planned your research in detail and that you have used appropriate research techniques skilfully to gather data and address your questions and/or hypotheses.

In many cases fieldwork will be an important part of the geographical study. However, you do not need to carry out fieldwork if other research methods will give you the information you need. You can still gain full marks without carrying out any fieldwork.

C Evaluate the research techniques and the reliability of data gathered (8 marks)

Evaluation involves making reasoned comments relating to, for example:

- ◆ relevance, importance, and/or reliability of gathered data
- ◆ strengths and weaknesses of techniques used
- ◆ any other relevant evaluative comment

You should:

- ◆ evaluate the gathering techniques used by assessing the relevance of the data obtained
- ◆ evaluate the reliability of the data with reference to sampling technique, number of samples and timing of data collection, and so on
- ◆ make explicit evaluative comments on the research techniques, including reference to next steps

D Demonstrate a detailed knowledge and understanding of the topic being studied from wider reading (8 marks)

You should use your knowledge and understanding within the context of the topic being studied and support your response to the topic.

You should make a range of clear and explicit points of evidence from wider reading. These should be:

- ◆ relevant to the topic being studied
- ◆ developed (by including additional detail, exemplification, reasons or evidence related to the topic being studied)
- ◆ used to support the findings from research relevant to the topic being studied

You should include clear references to all sources you have used in a detailed bibliography.

E Use a wide range of appropriate techniques to process the gathered information (10 marks)

You should:

- ◆ use a wide range of valid processing techniques (for example, graphical or statistical) to process the gathered information and/or data
- ◆ ensure that your choice of techniques are relevant to the research questions, sub-aims or hypotheses

F Analyse all the information that has been gathered and processed to identify and explain relationships (12 marks)

Analysis involves using relevant information and/or data to identify and explain links and/or relationships within the wider context of the study.

You should make analytical statements about, for example:

- ◆ links and/or relationships between the different data sets that you have gathered and processed
- ◆ links and/or relationships between the different data sets and the wider context of the study
- ◆ similarities and/or contradictions between the data sets and related theories

You should use your analysis to show that you understand the wider context of the topic being studied and/or relevant theoretical ideas.

G Reach reasoned conclusion(s) supported by a wide range of evidence (8 marks)

You should use the different pieces of information to support your response to the questions raised in the topic. These can come from the sources you have researched, and/or your own knowledge. You should:

- ◆ give at least one conclusion that presents an overall judgement about the topic. This should be:
 - supported by a wide range of evidence and go beyond repetition of analysis
 - based on the developed points within your argument
- ◆ organise your overall response into a logical sequence in response to the questions raised in the topic. Your conclusion(s) could, but does not need to, come at the end of your writing

Geographical issue

A Justify the choice of a current complex geographical issue to critically evaluate (4 marks)

You should choose a current geographical issue that allows you to:

- ◆ carry out research relating to a wide range of sources with contrasting viewpoints
- ◆ use relevant additional detail
- ◆ summarise the viewpoints
- ◆ critically evaluate the sources and/or viewpoints

You should justify your choice of topic by:

- ◆ explaining the purpose of researching the topic
- ◆ explaining the relevance of the issue in the context of the subject and/or why the issue is worth learning about
- ◆ making explicit reference to relevant geographical literature and/or research

B Undertake wider background reading from a wide range of sources relating to the geographical issue (8 marks)

You should research a number of sources of information with a range of viewpoints, and decide on three main sources. These should express views that are relevant to the geographical issue, and be:

- ◆ current and up to date
- ◆ prioritised
- ◆ listed correctly in a detailed bibliography

You should prioritise your three main sources from a wider range of sources. When doing this you should consider relevant criteria on which to prioritise them (for example, the author's level of expertise).

C Summarise a wide range of viewpoints on the complex geographical issue (10 marks)

Summarising involves identifying and understanding the key information within the viewpoints. You should:

- ◆ summarise at least three viewpoints effectively and demonstrate that you have a good understanding of the issue
- ◆ organise your information systematically and be able to express the key viewpoints proposed by the authors, including information in diagrams, graphs or tables, as appropriate

D Critically evaluate each of the viewpoints (10 marks)

You should make reasoned, critically evaluative comments on the significance of the viewpoints, including:

- ◆ relevance, significance, or reliability of the content including the text, quality of maps and/or diagrams, and statistics
- ◆ credibility of the authors and publications you use
- ◆ identification of bias and/or exaggeration
- ◆ comparing and contrasting the viewpoints
- ◆ giving examples from wider reading to support your evaluative comments

E Reach reasoned conclusion(s) supported by a wide range of evidence (8 marks)

You should give at least one conclusion that summarises the key elements of the issue and may give an overall judgement.

Your conclusion(s) should:

- ◆ be supported by a wide range of evidence
- ◆ be well argued
- ◆ show a clear understanding of the issue
- ◆ be well organised
- ◆ consider all the viewpoints you have researched
- ◆ be more than a repetition of information discussed earlier
- ◆ show some insight into the issue
- ◆ be supported by organising, linking or sequencing of ideas, using all the evidence

Your conclusion(s) could, but does not need to, come at the end of your writing.

Referencing findings using appropriate conventions and writing a bibliography: geographical study and geographical issue

You should clearly reference and acknowledge all secondary sources, both in the text and in the bibliography.

You should use a referencing system and bibliography which is appropriate for the subject and the study and issue you are researching. It is important to be consistent in your use of referencing.

You should:

- ◆ understand how to use an appropriate referencing system or convention
- ◆ be accurate in your referencing
- ◆ reference all your quotations
- ◆ consider that specific facts such as statistics should usually be referenced unless they are commonly used in all books on the subject
- ◆ be aware that if a paragraph is based entirely on one book, then you should reference it, even if you do not use a direct quotation

You can use a straightforward referencing style, for example:

- ◆ author, date, *title*, page number, publisher:
— Gillespie, R. (2011) *Critical Navigation Skills*, p93, Penguin Books

You may use the conventional *ibid* and *op cit* as appropriate.

Your research findings should be accompanied by a bibliography. As with references, learning how to construct and present a proper bibliography is part of the process of generating evidence of research for a topic. Your bibliography should be a genuine note of all the sources you used. It is important that you correctly enter the author's name and the title. You should also include the publication date and publisher (see example above).

Most university websites give advice on setting out a bibliography. Some well-known standard formats include Harvard, MLA and APA. The main point is that you should be consistent in the format you choose to use and consider which style is most appropriate for your area of research.

You should also record websites in your bibliography. List the web addresses and the dates you accessed them. This is important because websites frequently change.

Layout of the project—folio

Both parts of the project—folio have defined word limits. The geographical study should have no more than 3,000 words and the geographical issue should have no more than 1,800 words. However, as a guide you might consider that a well-produced study would not normally exceed 25 A4 pages and a well-produced issue would not normally exceed 12 A4 pages.

If the word count for the geographical study and/or the geographical issue exceeds the maximum by more than 10%, a penalty is applied.

When planning the layout of your project–folio you may want to consider, for example:

- ◆ presenting text on A4 single-sided pages
- ◆ using larger pages
- ◆ using a standard font size throughout, for example Arial 12pt (titles or headings may be larger)
- ◆ using consistent line spacing, for example 1.5
- ◆ setting both left and right margins at 2.5 cm
- ◆ using consistent formatting of headings and subheadings, for example same font, bold, italics
- ◆ numbering each page
- ◆ making sure that text contained in diagrams is legible and relevant
- ◆ presenting direct quotes from the sources in such a way that they are distinct from the main text

Working with others

It might be helpful to work part of the time with others when you are researching your study or issue, for example when carrying out fieldwork. You must acknowledge any group fieldwork in your study.

It is important that the evidence you produce is your own work.

Administrative information

Published: September 2023 (version 2.0)

History of changes

| Version | Description of change | Date |
|---------|---|----------------|
| 2.0 | <p>In the detailed marking instructions table, the additional guidance column has been updated as follows:</p> <p>Geographical study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ part A, 3-4 marks: bullets relating to purpose and relevance updated for clarification◆ part C, 4-6 marks: comments related to next steps added◆ part G: clarification given about awarding marks for the conclusion wherever it appears in the study <p>Geographical issue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ part E: clarification given about awarding marks for the conclusion wherever it appears in the issue | September 2023 |
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Note: you are advised to check SQA's website to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of this document.

Security and confidentiality

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