2022 Geography Subject Assessment Advice

Overview

Subject assessment advice, based on the 2022 assessment cycle, gives an overview of how students performed in their school and external assessments in relation to the learning requirements, assessment design criteria, and performance standards set out in the relevant subject outline. They provide information and advice regarding the assessment types, the application of the performance standards in school and external assessments, and the quality of student performance.

Teachers should refer to the subject outline for specifications on content and learning requirements, and to the subject operational information for operational matters and key dates.

Across the Assessment Types for this subject, students can present their responses in oral or multimodal form, where 6 minutes is the equivalent of 1000 words. Students **should not speed-up the recording** of their videos excessively **in an attempt to condense more content** into the maximum time limit.

From 2023, if a video is flagged by markers/moderators as impacted by speed, **schools will be requested to provide a transcript** and markers/moderators will be advised to mark/moderate based on the evidence in the transcript, only considering evidence up to the maximum word limit (e.g. up to 2000 words for AT3).

If the speed of the recording makes the speech incomprehensible, it affects the accuracy of transcriptions and it also impacts the ability of markers/moderators to find evidence of student achievement against the performance standards.

School Assessment

Teachers can improve the moderation process and the online process by:

* thoroughly checking that all grades entered in Schools Online are correct
* ensuring the uploaded tasks are legible
* ensuring all four tasks for AT1: Skills and Applications are uploaded
* ensuring the tasks for AT1: Skills and Applications cover the required Stage 2 topics as identified in the subject outline
* ensuring permissions are not required for responses based on online platforms e.g. ArcGIS storymaps, Microsoft SWAY.

Assessment Type 1: Skills and Applications

Students complete four geographical Skills and Applications tasks which together comprise a maximum of 4000 words or the equivalent in multimodal from (6 minutes in multimodal form is the equivalent of 1000 words).

Three tasks must be taken from the following Stage 2 Geography topics:

* one task from Topic 2: Climate change
* one task from Topic 4: Globalisation
* one task from Topic 5: Transforming global inequality.

One task can be from any topic or have a focus on fieldwork or geographical skills.

Teachers can elicit more successful responses by:

* providing opportunities for students to use a variety of media in their responses, particularly multimodal formats such as screen casts, movie clips, storymaps, SWAYs
* focussing on contemporary issues
* providing students with choice in their issue for assessments
* using fewer specific features in each task, which will allow students to achieve at the highest levels
* providing opportunities for students to address economic, social, and environmental factors across the four tasks.

The more successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated high levels of analysis through the integration of geographical data, maps, diagrams, and other annotated images
* applied geographical terminology accurately and appropriately to the issue or subject matter
* demonstrated varied and appropriate application of spatial technology and geographical skills, including the use of student-generated maps
* used a wide variety of formats to present their responses, including multimodal options such as screencasts and storymaps
* investigated contemporary issues within topics, and provided specific examples to illustrate knowledge and understanding
* demonstrated understanding and use of the key words of the performance standards, notably ‘analyse’ and ‘evaluate’.
* made appropriate recommendations for change and improvement when relevant to the assessment task.

The less successful responses commonly:

* drifted towards description when analysis was required
* demonstrated understanding through largely written tasks without integration of data or relevant maps and diagrams
* demonstrated basic application of geographical skills, particularly in the use of spatial technologies, to support their analysis
* had limited student voice or choice and relied heavily on scaffolding
* recalled knowledge from case studies undertaken in class with basic analysis and evaluation
* provided superficial detail to demonstrate knowledge and understanding, analysis and evaluation.

Assessment Type 2: Fieldwork Report

Students produce one individual fieldwork report. Each student is responsible for **independently** planning, organising, and carrying out fieldwork and completing a report. Fieldwork techniques used to collect primary data are paramount in the report, and students should analyse and evaluate primary data as the basis of their report. Information from secondary sources may be used to support students’ primary data.

The fieldwork report may be in multimodal, written, and/or oral form. A written report should be a maximum of 2000 words; an oral report should be a maximum of 12 minutes; a report in multimodal form should be of equivalent length.

Teachers can elicit more successful responses by:

* taking note of the **‘and/or’** in the wording of the performance standards. Students are no longer required to cover *all* aspects of AE 1 and 2; they should choose a *minimum of one aspect* depending on the scope of their fieldwork report, (e.g. AE1: environmental, social, or economic factors; AE2: outcomes, conclusions, recommendations or problem solving).
* encouraging students to use spatial technologies to indicate the location of their fieldwork and to analyse the spatial aspect of their primary data
* ensuring students use a wide range of fieldwork techniques to collect primary data
* limiting the use of secondary sources of data – this should be for support only
* encouraging students to use GIS to effectively analyse the spatial nature of their data, ensuring students have a spatial element (and temporal if applicable) to their fieldwork.

The more successful responses commonly:

* had a clear hypothesis or guiding question that was spatial in nature; some also had a temporal aspect
* used a wide variety of relevant fieldwork techniques which yielded a large amount of primary quantitative and qualitative data
* provided geographical background information to support their hypothesis or question
* included detailed location data for the field study area and sample sites
* integrated a wide variety of maps, diagrams, tables, statistical analysis, and other annotated images such as photos and sketches
* included maps and diagrams etc. as part of the analysis and to demonstrate patterns and relationships in the data
* used the data collected to answer the hypothesis or guiding question
* effectively used GIS throughout the report, not only for location but also for the analysis of collected data
* made recommendations for improvement in the conclusion, where appropriate.

The less successful responses commonly:

* relied heavily on secondary data rather than using this for supporting primary data only
* did not have a clear or answerable hypothesis or guiding question which made it difficult to conclude the report with any outcomes, judgments, or recommendations (if relevant)
* did not refer to the hypothesis or guiding question throughout the report or in the final summary/conclusion
* had limited primary data collection techniques and relied heavily on photographs and secondary sources of data, and did not specify spatial and temporal aspects of their fieldwork methodology
* were descriptive rather than explanatory in their analysis and/or lacked overall findings or conclusions
* presented and analysed data through a small number of basic presentation methods, usually, graphs (bar and pie charts)
* provided only a location map and did not use maps, GIS or otherwise, to support the analysis of primary data
* used only Google maps to provide a spatial aspect to their fieldwork report
* included evaluation of data collection methodology and of the analysed data, this is no longer a requirement of the assessment task
* had basic evaluation of the social, economic and/or environmental aspects of the issue under investigation
* described recommendations that were generic and not specific to the fieldwork hypothesis or spatial nature of the fieldwork.

External Assessment

Students undertake one 2-hour examination. The examination has two sections: Section 1 focusing on geographical skills, and Section 2 on Topic 1: Ecosystems and People, and Topic 3: Population Change.

Students use a range of geographical skills to interpret written and visual materials, including maps, and apply these skills in unfamiliar contexts.

Assessment Type 3: Examination

Question 1

* Most students were successful in using both maps to identify reasons for popularity of the region with tourists, demonstrating a strong understanding of both features and map legends.
* A range of tourism management strategies were identified and explained using evidence from the town map, with many referring to the one-way system or parking restrictions with full explanations.
* A wide range of fieldwork approaches were provided by students, including pedestrian, traffic and litter counts, bi-polar analysis on impacts, surveys, and interviews.
* More successful responses provided explicit measures to ensure validity, such as repeating fieldwork at different times, a consistent method that is repeatable, and effective sample areas.
* Less successful responses described their method with limited justification.

Question 2

* More successful responses explicitly detailed how specific components, such as colour scale, location data, spatial components, and relief assisted the viewer.
* Less successful responses were vague, simply stating “easy to interpret”.
* In 2(b) many successful students referred to larger scale choropleth maps or bar graphs, explaining their benefits in terms of wider coverage or easy comparison between locations.
* Less effective responses referred generically to graphs, with little understanding of both how the data would be shown and/or how it would be advantageous over the provided displays of data.
* In 2(c) successful candidates utilised the list in source 3 by specifically stating locations of these features in and around Ambelside, using either grid references or compass directions. Less effective responses simply restated source 3.

Question 3

* All sections were answered successfully by most students, with effective use of the legend to identify the historic features and correct grid references provided.
* A range of potential challenges to cyclists were identified from the information on the map, with successful responses identifying either the changes in elevation, high slopes in excess of 20%, potential of flooding, or narrow nature of the roads.

Question 4

* Many students used map evidence to effectively evaluate the potential benefits of sites X and Y. Most candidates effectively came to a decision, with many successful responses referring to the size of the upper reservoir, the distance, and changes in slopes between upper and lower reservoir, the role of vegetation, and/or road access.
* Less effective responses referred only to 1 or 2 factors, limiting marks allocated.

Question 5

* Whilst some students effectively used compass directions to describe distribution and explained this in relation to water sources and rivers, rainfall, and boundaries with other countries, many students were unclear in explanations, simply listing the zones where people lived.

Question 6

* Most students provided valid reasons for high levels of deforestation, including clearance of land for agriculture, for timber export or for fuelwood.
* There was a wide range of student responses for 6 (b) with effective answers demonstrating a clear understanding of ecosystem processes. Less effective responses simply re-stated parts of the question or were vague on process, for example “vegetation improves air quality.”
* Few understood the ecosystem services referred to benefits humans gain from ecosystems.
* A wide range of strategies to improve the sustainability of ecosystems were provided for question 6 (b). Effective responses explicitly stated how the strategy would improve sustainability.

Question 7

* Some candidates correctly identified that population growth and economic development may have contributed to an increase in total footprint. While some identified that re-vegetation may lead to an increase in total biocapacity.
* Understanding of what influences biocapacity was not evident in many responses.

Question 8

* Most responses demonstrated an excellent understanding of factors influencing birth rates, with most effective responses explaining a factor specifically linked to data in the table.
* A wide range of appropriate strategies to increase birth rates were explained, with most effective responses naming a country-specific example with clear explanation of the strategy.
* Most responses provided a good understanding of the possible benefits of inward migration to countries such as Japan, with reference to growing working population, brain gain, increases to fertility, and cultural diversity evident.