

REVISED GCE AS & A LEVEL  
Student Guide  
**Geography**

For first teaching from September 2008

For first award of AS Level in Summer 2009

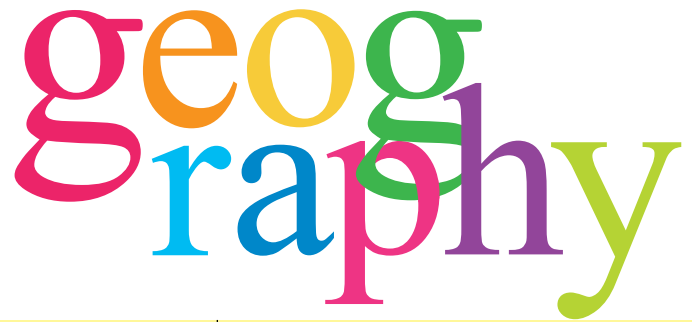
For first award of A Level in Summer 2010

geography

**AS 1: Fieldwork in Geography**

# Student Guide: AS Geography

## Fieldwork



Guidance to support candidates in preparation for Section A of AS1

Stages within the Investigation Process	Guidance	Key Questions
<b>AIM</b>	Selecting the theme and specific purpose of the study often requires careful thought. It must closely relate to the theoretical concepts of the AS1 & AS2 study units. Having gained a knowledge of all relevant theoretical concepts, the candidate is then in a position to clarify an explicit aim and possibly develop a number of relevant hypotheses (which can be used to direct the course of the enquiry). The aim should provide scope to allow candidates to collect a range of fieldwork data and to develop a meaningful geographical conclusion.	How does the aim of the study link to the theoretical content of AS1 or AS2? What are the hypotheses? What is their purpose within the study?
<b>Selection of... LOCATION/ SITE</b>	Many factors need to be considered in the selection of a suitable site. As well as providing a suitable geographical environment to investigate the devised aim of the fieldwork, other factors such as accessibility, cost, time and safety may require consideration.	What site(s) were chosen for study? What factors influenced the choice of site? How did the physical, human or environmental geography of the area influence site selection?
<b>Planning for... HEALTH&amp; SAFETY</b>	In the context of fieldwork, risk assessment and management are essential and are a specific requirement of the revised specification.	What do the terms <b>Hazard</b> and <b>Risk</b> ? What is a risk assessment and how/ when/why was it conducted? What specific hazards were identified in the chosen fieldwork location? What contingencies were planned and adopted to manage the risks? How successful were the health and safety strategies in minimising risk?
<b>Planning for... DATA COLLECTION</b>	Primary and secondary data should be collected to allow for a thorough investigation of the aim. Constant consideration of the basic aim is essential to ensure relevant and sufficient data is collected to allow for analysis, interpretation and the formulation of meaningful geographical conclusions.	What variables were identified for data collection? What equipment or materials were required for data collection? How were data collection/capture materials devised? What is meant by pilot testing? Why is this an essential part of pre-fieldwork planning?
<b>SAMPLING</b>	It is essential to consider both sampling method and sample size in relation to the proposed aim of the study. It is imperative that the sampling method selected is appropriate for the study and an accurate procedure is planned. Sample size should	What is sampling? Why is it essential to employ sampling in the field? What method of sampling (random, systematic, stratified or pragmatic) was

	be sufficiently large to be representative and to allow for statistical analysis and the formulation of reliable conclusions.	employed? Why was this method selected? How was the sampling method conducted in the field? What size of sample was collected? What factors influenced the consideration of the sample size?
<b>DATA COLLECTION</b>	Data collection in the field should be carried out using appropriate equipment or materials and relevant secondary sources should be compiled. Candidates should experience, and be familiar with, all data collection procedures employed in the field, or subsequently the laboratory. The data collected should be tabulated and submitted along with the fieldwork report for examination purposes.	How was data collected in the field/ laboratory? What equipment was used? What steps were taken to ensure that reliable/accurate data was collected? What secondary sources were identified? Why were chosen sources identified as suitable? What is the actual role or purpose of secondary data within the investigation?
<b>GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION</b>	A wide variety of appropriate graphical/ cartographic techniques should be employed to present data. Candidates should be encouraged to use ICT to present data. It is essential that candidates can justify their selected methods.	What method(s) of graphical representation were selected to display data? Why were the chosen methods selected as appropriate?
<b>DATA ANALYSIS/ INTERPRETATION</b>	A detailed description of results, potential trends and residual values should be undertaken in relation to the aim of the study.	What trends, if any, are displayed in relation to the aim of the study? Do any anomalous values exist?
<b>STATISTICAL ANALYSIS</b>	Statistical techniques should be used to interpret and analyse data to enable its reliability to be ascertained. Significance testing provides objective proof for the acceptance or rejection of hypotheses.	What is the purpose of using statistics in geographical studies? What statistical method could be applied to the data? Why was this statistical method appropriate? As a result of significance testing, can hypotheses be accepted or rejected? How significant is the statistical outcome?
<b>GEOGRAPHICAL CONCLUSION</b>	This involves the formulation of a coherent summary of all key questions/hypotheses and the provision of geographical reasoning to support findings. Theoretical concepts or models may aid explanation.	What are the overall findings of the investigation in relation to the aim of the study? Do results conform/conflict with theoretical expectations?
<b>EVALUATION</b>	The strengths and weaknesses of the investigation should be critically reviewed. It is necessary to consider potential limitations of methods, results and conclusions. Potential modifications can be considered and possible extensions to fieldwork suggested. A self-critical analysis allows a deeper level of geographical understanding.	What are the strengths/weaknesses of the investigation? What factors may have influenced the reliability of the results and conclusions? Are there any obvious ways in which the investigation could be modified or improved? How could the investigation be extended to allow for a deeper geographical understanding?

