

OCR Report to Centres

June 2013

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It is also responsible for developing new specifications to meet national requirements and the needs of students and teachers. OCR is a not-for-profit organisation; any surplus made is invested back into the establishment to help towards the development of qualifications and support, which keep pace with the changing needs of today's society.

This report on the examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the examination.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this report.

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Overview

General Comments:

Pleasingly the good work of centres entering candidates for R406 continues. The marked step up in the level of preparation of work and resources from candidates is evident and is now rare to see incomplete work or work at the lower end of the mark range.

The new format of an internal investigation and a centre administered 'examination' continues to work well. There are now few hiccups with centres not fully realising that both elements of the work were required for moderation.

The internal investigation continues to see a variety of themes being addressed. Most centres developed one piece of work, in some cases using the work planned for GCSE studies and adapting the delivery and assessment of the resulting study. A few centres developed a series of mini investigations which also worked very successfully. Where GCSE work has been submitted for ELC it is the centres responsibility to ensure that the ELC mark sheet is applied to the work and that annotation is utilised to demonstrate to the moderator where the various criteria have been met in the candidate's work.

Again there was a wide variety of work developed and used. Fewer centres now appear to use ideas from the exemplar work on the OCR website, as confidence in planning a specific course to tailor to the local needs of the community the school serves and the specific interests and/or needs of the students following the course develops. Most centres introduced an aspect of primary data collection though a few chose to base their work on secondary research. The range of themes included; shopping centre developments, changes/growth in urban areas, physical geography investigations of coasts or rivers, natural hazards (mostly through secondary research) and 'my place'. There was no dominant theme in this range of studies though urban data collection was more common than the use of rural areas for field work.

It is refreshing to see students at ELC level developing extended studies, obviously having spent a considerable amount of time researching and presenting their information. Many centres now make excellent use of ICT facilities to develop this work, including the use of PowerPoint presentations (saved to disc or usb memory drives being used to send work to the moderators). Personal teaching experience suggests that students at this level are often motivated by the ability to produce professional looking work through ICT and will then take a greater sense of ownership of their studies. The work seen this June certainly bears out this idea.

The internally administered examination once again proved very successful with no suggestion of misinterpretation of the extended answer tasks within the papers. However, on a slightly worrying note, moderators did observe a few instances where the 'test' had been inaccurately marked or the test papers printed/copied for external moderation. Teachers are required to please check marking to ensure accuracy, as inaccurate marks could potentially affect the rank order of candidates, at which point moderators would need to send work back for re-assessment by the centre.

Administration throughout was felt to be very good by the moderation team. Thank you to all centres entering students for this assessment, this certainly helps the process to run smoother and quicker.

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Finally, attention must be drawn to the OCR website where documents and support materials for the specification can be found. These include specimen materials for both tasks, interactive marking coversheet, teacher handbook and some sample lesson plans. For centres considering this new specification these documents and support materials should prove very helpful.

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