Advanced Higher Geography Project-folio
General assessment information

This pack contains general assessment information for centres preparing candidates for the project-folio Component of Advanced Higher Geography Course assessment.

It must be read in conjunction with the specific assessment task(s) for this Component of Course assessment which may only be downloaded from SQA's designated secure website by authorised personnel.

Contents

Introduction

This is the general assessment information for Advanced Higher Geography project–folio.

This project–folio is worth 100 marks out of a total of 150 marks for the Course. 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 describes the general requirements for the assessment of the project–folio Component of this Course. It gives general information and instructions for assessors.

It must be read in conjunction with the assessment task for this Component of Course assessment.

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

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

Guidance on inclusive approaches to delivery and assessment in this Course is provided in the *Course/Unit Support Notes*.

What this assessment covers

This assessment contributes two thirds of the total marks for the Course.

The assessment will assess the skills, knowledge and understanding specified for the project–folio in the *Course Assessment Specification*. These are:

Section A: geographical study — the candidate is required to demonstrate the ability to undertake detailed research of a geographical nature which uses primary and/or secondary sources, to gather and process data and which reports findings appropriately. Project–folio section A is worth 60 marks.

In order to complete section A: (geographical study) candidates will:

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

Section B: geographical issue — the candidate is required to demonstrate the ability to carry out a critical evaluation of a complex geographical issue by identifying viewpoints, from a wide range of sources, relating to the issue and evaluating these viewpoints in a way that allows valid conclusions to be drawn. Project–folio section B is worth 40 marks.

In order to complete section B (geographical issue) candidates will:

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

Assessment

Purpose

The purpose of this project–folio is to demonstrate challenge and application by requiring the candidate to draw on and apply skills, knowledge and understanding within the context of research relating to a geographical study and issue. This may be related to areas candidates have studied in class if they wish, but they are free to research any appropriate geographical study and issue.

Assessment overview

Section A: geographical study
Candidates should demonstrate the ability to undertake detailed research of a geographical nature which uses primary and/or secondary sources, to gather and process data and report findings appropriately.

Section B: geographical issue
Candidates should demonstrate the ability to carry out a critical evaluation of a complex geographical issue by identifying viewpoints, from a wide range of sources, relating to the issue and evaluating these viewpoints in a way that allows valid conclusion(s) to be drawn.

Assessors should provide reasonable guidance on the types of study and issue which will enable candidates to meet all the requirements of this project–folio. They may also guide candidates as to the likely availability and accessibility of resources for their chosen study and issue.

Candidates should work on their project–folio with minimum support from the assessor.

Assessment conditions

Assessors must exercise their professional responsibility in ensuring that evidence submitted by a candidate is the candidate's own work.

This project–folio will be managed by centres within SQA guidelines and conducted under some supervision and control. However, the evidence for assessment must be produced independently by the candidate in time to meet a submission date set by SQA.

Evidence will be submitted to SQA for external marking.

This assessment will be carried out over a period of time. Candidates should start at an appropriate point in the Course. This will normally be after they have started work on the Units in the Course.

There are no restrictions on the resources to which candidates may have access.

Centres must ensure that each candidate's evidence for their project–folio is their own work. However, reasonable assistance may be provided. The term 'reasonable assistance' is used to try to balance the need for support with the need to avoid giving too much assistance. If any candidates require more than what is deemed to be 'reasonable assistance', they may not be ready for assessment or it may be that they have been entered for the wrong level of qualification.

Reasonable assistance may be given on a generic basis to a class or group of candidates, for example, advice on submission dates. It may also be given to candidates on an individual basis. When assistance is given on a one-to-one basis in the context of something the candidate has already produced or demonstrated, assessors need to be aware that this may be going beyond reasonable assistance.

Clarification may be sought by candidates regarding the wording of a brief or specification or instructions for the assessment if they find them unclear. In this case, the clarification should normally be given to the whole class.

Assessor input and advice is acceptable in order to allow the candidate to progress to the next stages of the assessment.

The project–folio will be conducted under some supervision and control. This means that although candidates may complete part of the work outwith the learning and teaching setting, assessors should put in place processes for monitoring progress and ensuring that the work is the candidate's own and that plagiarism has not taken place.

Assessors should put in place mechanisms to authenticate candidate evidence. For example:

♦   regular checkpoint/progress meetings with candidates
♦   short spot-check personal interviews
♦   checklists which record activity/progress

Group work approaches are acceptable during the research phase of the project–folio. However, the completed folio must be the candidate's own work.

Evidence to be gathered

The following candidate evidence is required for this assessment:

♦   candidate's completed project–folio