

GEOGRAPHY

CHOICE OF TOPIC

It is essential that the Extended Essay has a geographical emphasis and is not biased towards another subject. The Extended Essay should, therefore, incorporate geographical theory and emphasize the importance of spatial processes in geography. Whilst candidates are encouraged to undertake fieldwork as part of their research, fieldwork is not a compulsory requirement. Fieldwork usually means that the area to be researched should be local, and ideally, familiar to the student. The greater the scope of the Extended Essay or the larger the geographical area covered by the topic, the less likely it is that the Extended Essay will be successful. Restricting the scope of the essay will help ensure analysis in depth rather than in breadth.

The following examples of titles for Geography Extended Essays are intended as guidance only. The pairings illustrate that focused topics (indicated by the first title) should be encouraged rather than broad topics (indicated by the second title).

The influence of aspect on residential land use in San Salvador, El Salvador **but not** *Residential land use in Central America.*

A study in the seasonal variation in the transport network of Jersey, UK **but not** *The study of transport networks.*

The influence of distance on agricultural patterns in New South Wales, Australia **but not** *Influences on agricultural patterns.*

The effects of location on the characteristics of kiosks in Nairobi, Kenya **but not** *The effect of location on retail outlets.*

High school catchment areas in Denver, USA; their spheres of influence **but not** *High school catchment areas in the USA.*

TREATMENT OF THE TOPIC

The geographical context in which the research is being conducted should be described, perhaps with aid of a locational map. Geographical data is of little value unless it is analysed, using appropriate geographical/statistical/graphical techniques, and then evaluated. The element of personal evaluation is important when interpreting the results of data analysis. The student should show an understanding of the results and be able to interpret them with reference to the research question. Some explanation may be

necessary to consider modifying it. Alternatively, it may be helpful if some assessment of the conclusion(s) could be made in a future, or wider context. The sole use of photocopied or printed maps is rarely effective and provides no evidence of map skills. All maps should give some indication of scale and orientation. It is essential that the extended essay be supported by appropriate methods for illustrating information/data, such as diagrams, sketch maps, tables and/or graphs.

Aside from incorporating geographical theory, it is expected that statistical techniques or techniques/procedures which are characteristic of geographical enquiry will be included whenever appropriate. Eg network analysis, location quotients, gravity models, dispersion models, topological representations.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

J To what extent does the candidate use appropriate techniques of analysis and interpretation characteristic of geographical enquiry?

Achievement

Level

- | | |
|---|--|
| 0 | There is no evidence of any spatial element |
| 1 | Spatial elements may be evident, but they are given no emphasis |
| 2 | Spatial elements are evident, but they are given limited emphasis |
| 3 | Spatial elements are evident and they are given emphasis |
| 4 | Spatial elements are clearly evident and they are strongly emphasized. |

K To what extent does the candidate incorporate geographical theory?

Achievement

Level

- | | |
|---|--|
| 0 | No attempt has been made to include geographical theory. |
| 1 | There is some attempt to include geographical theory, but it is not applied or is relevant to the research question. |
| 2 | Geographical theory is included, but is of limited relevance to the research question. |
| 3 | Geographical theory is relevant and applied to the research question. |
| 4 | Geographical theory is relevant and well applied to the research question. |

L To what extent does the candidate use appropriate techniques of analysis and interpretation characteristic of geographical enquiry?

Achievement

Level

- | | |
|---|--|
| 0 | Analytical techniques, if used, are inappropriate to geographical enquiry. |
| 1 | Analytical techniques are either inappropriate or poorly applied, with little attempt at interpretation. |
| 2 | Analytical techniques, characteristic of geography, are not always appropriate; if appropriate they have limitations in their application and/or are misinterpreted. |
| 3 | Analytical techniques, characteristic of geography, are appropriate, applied and interpreted. |
| 4 | Analytical techniques, characteristic of geography, are appropriate and well applied with competent interpretation. |