



Qualifications and
Curriculum Authority

Inter-subject comparability studies

Forms used for analysis of examination materials and candidate work

QCA/08/3658

A

Factual analysis of syllabuses, question papers and mark schemes

Qualification: GCSE/GCE A level

Subject:

Awarding body:

Year:

Name of reviewer

1 GENERAL INFORMATION

Please give brief details about each of the following in the syllabus:

General philosophy

Aims

Anticipated teaching time

Access to resources (e.g. open book examination)

Specification of prior knowledge

Additional syllabus support material
if 'yes' please list materials

Overall page length of syllabus:

2 ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

summarise assessment objectives, with weightings where possible. Continue grid as necessary

assessment objective	Weighting (if given)	how assessed (eg written paper; coursework)	comments

3 SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT

Please give details of each assessment component. Continue grid as necessary. For 'type of assessment', please use the following codes:
[Use as many as needed to describe the component fully.]

- A** written examination
- B** coursework
- C** other type of task (give details)
- D** externally assessed
- E** internally assessed
- F** task set by centre
- G** task set by awarding body

Component title	% weighting	time allowance	type of assessment	comments

Component title	% weighting	time allowance	type of assessment	comments

Component title	% weighting	time allowance	type of assessment	comments

Component title	% weighting	time allowance	type of assessment	comments

4b OPTIONS

i) Number of option routes within syllabus:.....
(E.g. 2 compulsory papers plus choice of 1 from 3)

ii) Number of option routes within paper.....
(E.g. Paper 1: 1 context out of 3, plus 3 essays out of 12)

Summarise pattern of option availability:

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4c Further comments on content: depth, breadth etc

Assume **minimum coverage** allowed by structure of **examination**, rather than what **syllabus** indicates as desirable. N.B. This may be affected by choice in the components taken, choice in the questions answered within a component.

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5 QUESTION PAPERS (including coursework)

Type of questions (use following codes as necessary)

- A** multiple choice/completion
- B** short answer
- C** open-ended
- D** essay
- E** structured question

Paper title	duration	question type(s)	other comments (eg no. of questions of each type; content covered etc)

Are mark allocations given on questions? [Y/N]

Other general comments (clarity and layout, rubrics, stimulus material)

6 MARK SCHEMES (including assessment criteria for coursework)

Comment on nature and extent of mark schemes:

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B

Differences in demand between qualifications:
syllabuses, question papers and mark schemes

Qualification: GCSE/ A level

Subject:

Awarding body:

Name of reviewer:

1 GENERAL INFORMATION

For each element, please consider factual differences identified through A forms, then comment on whether the differences identified lead to differences in demand, and whether differences in some areas are offset in others. Quote examples wherever possible.

General philosophy and syllabus aims

Anticipated teaching time

Access to resources

Specification of prior knowledge

Level of syllabus detail and support material

Please rate each element below, for each subject, on the given scale. Add any comment you wish in the space below, especially where there are differences in rating.

SYLLABUS

2.1 Assessment objectives

	Very undemanding		About right		Very demanding
Subject	1	2	3	4	5
Geography					
History					

Justification for your judgements:

2.2 Scheme of assessment (taking account of any levels of choice, the balance of breadth and depth)

Subject	Very undemanding		About right		Very demanding
	1	2	3	4	5
Geography					
History					

Justification for your judgements:

3 CONTENT

3.1 Nature of topics

Subject	Very undemanding		About right		Very demanding
	1	2	3	4	5
Geography					
History					

Justification for your judgements:

3.2 Range of topics

Subject	Very undemanding		About right		Very demanding
	1	2	3	4	5
Geography					
History					

Justification for your judgements:

3.3 Number of topics

Subject	Very undemanding		About right		Very demanding
	1	2	3	4	5
Geography					
History					

Justification for your judgements:

3.4 Balance of compulsory and optional topics

Subject	Very undemanding		About right		Very demanding
	1	2	3	4	5
Geography					
History					

Justification for your judgements:

4 QUESTION PAPERS

4.1 CRAS analysis

Please complete a CRAS analysis as instructed in the CRAS analysis briefing note. In all cases, please also consider the marking schemes/criteria when evaluating the demand. CRAS ratings should be recorded on the CRAS question paper analysis form.

4.2 Nature of tasks

Subject	Very undemanding		About right		Very demanding
	1	2	3	4	5
Geography					
History					

Justification for your judgements:

4.3 Time available per question

Subject	Very undemanding		About right		Very demanding
	1	2	3	4	5
Geography					
History					

Justification for your judgements:

4.4 Demand of question papers in terms of layout and presentation

Subject	Very undemanding		About right		Very demanding
	1	2	3	4	5
Geography					
History					

Justification for your judgements:

4.5 Coverage of assessment objectives

Subject	Very undemanding		About right		Very demanding
	1	2	3	4	5
Geography					
History					

Justification for your judgements:

4.6 Accessibility of questions for lower attaining candidates

Subject	Very undemanding		About right		Very demanding
	1	2	3	4	5
Geography					
History					

Justification for your judgements:

4.7 Appropriateness of questions/tasks to allow grade A candidates to demonstrate their knowledge/skills/understanding

Subject	Very undemanding		About right		Very demanding
	1	2	3	4	5
Geography					
History					

Justification for your judgements:

4.8 Overall demand of question papers

Subject	Very undemanding		About right		Very demanding
	1	2	3	4	5
Geography					
History					

Justification for your judgements:

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5 COURSEWORK – requirements of coursework

Subject	Very undemanding		About right		Very demanding
	1	2	3	4	5
Geography					
History					

Justification for your judgements:

6 OVERALL DEMAND

Subject	Very undemanding		About right		Very demanding
	1	2	3	4	5
Geography					
History					

Justification for your judgements:

C

Summary of judgements

Level GCSE/A level

Subject:

Name of reviewer:

Overall summary

Please list five key points about the analysis you have undertaken.

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

For each element in the B forms, please record your rating for each subject and each qualification you have analysed. Add any comment you wish in the space below, especially where there are patterns in the ratings.

KEY

Very undemanding		About right		Very demanding
1	2	3	4	5

SYLLABUS

Assessment objectives

	GCSE	AS	A level
Geography			
History			

Scheme of assessment (including any levels of choice, the balance of breadth and depth)

	GCSE	AS	A level
Geography			
History			

Content**Nature of topics**

	GCSE	AS	A level
Geography			
History			

Range of topics

	GCSE	AS	A level
Geography			
History			

Number of topics

	GCSE	AS	A level
Geography			
History			

Balance of compulsory and optional topics

	GCSE	AS	A level
Geography			
History			

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Assessment (including mark schemes/assessment criteria)**Nature of tasks**

	GCSE	AS	A level
Geography			
History			

Time available per question

	GCSE	AS	A level
Geography			
History			

Demand of question papers in terms of layout and presentation

	GCSE	AS	A level
Geography			
History			

Coverage of objectives

	GCSE	AS	A level
Geography			
History			

Accessibility of questions for lower attaining candidates

	GCSE	AS	A level
Geography			
History			

Appropriateness of questions/tasks to allow grade A candidates to demonstrate their knowledge/skills/understanding

	GCSE	AS	A level
Geography			
History			

Overall demand of question papers

	GCSE	AS	A level
Geography			
History			

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Requirements of coursework

	GCSE	AS	A level
Geography			
History			

OVERALL DEMAND

	GCSE	AS	A level
Geography			
History			

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Humanities comparability study CRAS analysis of questions and question papers Briefing note

Background

The task of comparing examination papers is essentially qualitative. In that sense, the space for comments on the forms used for the exercise are their most important part.

However, experience suggests that there is much to be gained by asking for focussed judgements and for requiring from them the precision of numerical values. If nothing else, the process helps define cases where there are differences and thus shows where qualitative comment is most needed.

The criteria used for the exercise: *complexity*, *resources*, *abstractness* and *strategy*: are those found by several projects (most notably some work on structured questions carried out for QCA by UCLES) to be the main means by which the difficulty of a question can be legitimately altered¹. The categories were arrived at by a version of Kelly's Repertory Grid, whereby practitioners were shown examples of questions and asked to identify differences between them.

Each category is given a brief explanation to help identify the kind of features which it covers. Each category is then divided into a four-point scale, where points 1 and 4 are given descriptions of the extreme form of the category. This is all set out in the grid **Question analysis criteria** (overleaf).

The process

For each syllabus being reviewed you should first complete the comment boxes on form A and the first part of form B. You should then take the question paper and mark scheme for each unit and rate each unit for each of the four categories: *complexity*, *resources*, *abstractness* and *strategy*. **Please note that some units will require more than one set of ratings, for example, where they have a section A and section B with very different types of task.**

You should record your ratings for each unit or sub-section of a unit on the **Question paper analysis form**. This should enable you to take an overview of the syllabus as a whole and to comment on any particular aspects.

You should then repeat the process for each syllabus. To enable effective discussion across syllabuses, it is, therefore, important that you use the same expectations and standards in making all of your judgements.

¹ It is, of course, possible to make questions more difficult by less valid means such as by greatly increasing the language levels in them.

Question analysis criteria

	1	2 - 3	4
<p>Complexity The complexity of each component operation or idea and the links between them</p>	<p>Simple operations (i.e. ideas/steps) No comprehension, except that required for natural language No links between operations</p>		<p>Synthesis or evaluation of operations Requires technical comprehension Makes links between operations</p>
<p>Resources The use of data and information</p>	<p>All and only the data/information needed is given</p>		<p>Student must generate all the necessary data/information</p>
<p>Abstractness The extent to which the student deals with ideas rather than concrete objects or phenomena</p>	<p>Deals with concrete objects Avoids need for technical terms</p>		<p>Highly abstract Requires use of technical terms</p>
<p>Strategy The extent to which the student devises (or selects) and maintains a strategy for tackling and answering the question</p>	<p>Strategy for answer is given No need to monitor strategy No selection of information required No organisation required</p>		<p>Student needs to devise their own strategy Student must monitor the application of their strategy Must select content from a large, complex pool of information Must organise how to communicate response</p>

Humanities comparability study

CRAS analysis record form

Subject:

Level:

Reviewer:

Unit	Complexity	Resources	Abstractness	Strategy	Overall rating

Comments:

**Humanities comparability study
Script review
Form 1**

Reviewer _____

Session no. _____

GCSE/AS/A2 grade _____

(record of judgments on scripts considered across two subjects at one qualification level)

Please circle winning candidate for each comparison

Geography/pack no.	History/pack no.		
Candidate no.	Candidate no.	Comment	

Geography/pack no.	History/pack no.	
Candidate no.	Candidate no.	Comment

For official use only:

Total number of comparisons:	
Geography:	
History:	