

# Geography

Entry Level Certificate R406

## Examiner's Report

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**June 2011**

**R406/R/11**

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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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## R406 Entry Level Geography

### General Comments:

It was very pleasing to see the take-up of this new specification this year and to see centres entering candidates from a variety of backgrounds. It was also pleasing to see a marked step-up in the level of preparation of work and resources from previous ELC Geography work. Well done to staff and students for this.

The new format of an internal investigation and a centre-administered test worked well. There were a few minor issues with some centres not fully realising that both tasks were required for moderation, though the time-frame allowed these misunderstandings to be quickly cleared up. For staff that are considering moving from legacy ELC specifications to this new course, please note the sampling process is slightly different. Unlike previous years, where centres chose the sample of six students' work to send on to the moderator, OCR Moderation Manager will now select a sample and notify centres of this via email.

The Key Theme Project saw 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 were very successful.

There was a wide variety of work developed and used. Many appeared to have used ideas from the specimen work on the OCR website, some using aspects integrated into their own work, such as the decision-making exercises. Most centres introduced an aspect of primary data collection though a few chose to base their work on secondary research. The range of project topics included: shopping centre developments, changes/growth in urban areas, physical geography investigations of coasts or rivers, natural hazards, national parks and 'your place'.

It is refreshing to see candidates at Entry Level developing extended studies, having spent a considerable amount of time researching and presenting their information. Many centres made excellent use of ICT facilities to develop this work. Staff teaching these students are to be congratulated on the good use of geographical terminology by their students – an achievement at this level. 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 view. Centres making use of ICT to develop their studies may consider making use of the OCR Repository to upload work for moderation in future years.

The internally-administered End-of-Course Test proved very successful with no suggestion of misinterpretation of the extended answer questions within the tests.

Again, it is possible to upload the interactive versions of the tests to the OCR Repository if a centre chooses to complete the test electronically.

In marking terms, the judgement of the assessment of most students' work was right. In the few instances where marks were scaled (mostly upwards), the moderation team felt that this was more the result of an unwillingness to use the full range of marks in the mark band range rather than incorrectly assigning work to level one, two or three for the various Assessment Objectives. Where the assessor feels that most of the criteria for a mark band have been covered, the mark should reflect this and be at the higher end of the range for that mark band.

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

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