



Moderators' Report/ Principal Moderator Feedback

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Pearson Edexcel GCSE
Extended Projects Qualification
in Performance (P302) Paper 01

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Investigation/Field Study

Student Performance

A good range of suitable topics was seen, though the number of projects submitted for this Series (as in the past) was small. A couple of nice iterative pieces of work based on experimental data gathering were seen with better data sample sizes being used and thus more mathematical statistical analysis being possible. As previously, it is clear that the original choice of topic, and in particular a narrow hypothesis to test, is key to the success of the correlation testing and subsequent analysis. A clear hypothesis (or more than one) should be formally stated (a hypothesis is not a question) and then tested and then 'answered' and the level of confidence given. It is vital that the limitations are appreciated; without this AO3 marks are limited. A number of projects still lack significant primary data altogether (or it was peripheral) and there continues to be confusion over the word 'Investigation'; a Dissertation supported by a questionnaire or similar would be a better fit to the marking grid than a small sample questionnaire or a selection of interviews, which are basically just other sources. A project has to be extended and involve a developing process. If there is a single test with variables, this is no more than an experiment. The Investigation also needs to be set in context and have some *raison d'être*. This series there were a couple of experiments, which did not really match the context they were meant to represent. If large data sets are generated then this is where the scope for statistical analysis exists. Personally, motivated projects resulting from an interest or hobby still tend to produce the best results.

Suitability of Work Submitted

Where a narrow, testable hypothesis was proposed, projects had the focus required to meet the expectations of depth and analysis. This unit is differentiated from Unit 1 by the expectation of a more scientific and mathematical approach and thus the conclusion should involve the rejection or acceptance of the starting hypothesis at a declared level of significance. It is acceptable for students to receive guidance and supervision from a tutor or external expert, perhaps from a tertiary centre throughout, but it is expected that, to access the higher mark positions in AO1, the student will refine their hypothesis or research question independently and show an independent self-reflective journey and a clearly understood conclusion. It is abundantly clear that candidates who receive good guidance at the planning stages are able to score highly in all areas.

Proposal forms were completed to a much better standard, though the breakdown of tasks and assignment of milestones could have been fuller in some cases. In one case the Proposal Form was missing and this mitigates against marking in the first Assessment Objective. Where a focused question was chosen and a decent amount of data gathered, students were able to produce detailed conclusions. Projects based on mainly qualitative results are more limited. The quantity of raw data collected does affect the quality of statistical analysis.

Projects need to be well-structured and showed clear headings, labelling and illustrations. Projects are sometimes still hard to read and would profit from a more in-depth introduction as to what is being tackled. The more complex the subject, the clearer the communication should be; projects must not assume prior knowledge.

It was pleasing to some full and considered Activity Logs. The ability to record thoughts, decisions and problems faced with proposed solutions, enable high marks in both AO1 and AO4 to be accessed. However, this series a couple of Logs were very bare and just facula records of tasks undertaken.

Assessment Evidence

There was good evidence of consistent application of the marking grids, moderation was largely in agreement and only light leniency was seen at the top end. In some cases, a lack of detailed annotation (or any annotation at all) or other evidence (exciting PowerPoint slides) did not support the high marks awarded, particularly also the lack of comment and analysis in the Bibliography meant AO2 marks had been awarded leniently. The level of source evaluation and understanding of the requirements of a Bibliography and full referencing in the text is still largely misunderstood. A list of URLs is not a bibliography and there is no attempt in many projects to show critical selection; AO2 marks tend still to be the most lenient. There must be a taught element to an Extended Project, as candidates cannot be expected to get it right on their own. Few centres showed evidence of a skills course in Activity Logs, though in the quality of work in some cases this was implicit. Marks given in AO1 and AO4 were generally supported if evidence was presented. The majority of the Centres seen are appreciating the importance of the preparation phase. The self-reflective evaluation of the project process was generally well handled. Oral presentations were predominantly judged to be of high quality, however slides often showed them to be rather wordy and dull.

Centre Performance

Most Centres submitted scripts by the deadline, though several had to be chased. Samples were generally in accordance with expectations, though a number lacked evidence of presentations. Centres entering multiple candidates marked by more than one tutor showed evidence of internal moderation, as required, and several Centres even detailed their internal moderation procedure. Centres continue to show evidence of responding to external moderator feedback from previous submissions, which is pleasing. The level and frequency of annotation was good in many cases, where the wording from the marking criteria is used to highlight the award of marks, this greatly aids moderation, though individualised comments are also needed. Simply ticking or leaving a sheet blank means that it is not clear that the report has been carefully assessed throughout. Proposal Forms were correctly credited for good time management, though as stated above, breakdown of timings at the proposal stage continues to be a weakness

Sample sizes were generally large enough to allow mathematical analysis and some statistical significance in findings to be present. Presentation of data in bar graphs or pie charts alone is insufficient at this level, trends and correlations or testing must be carried out. Only a couple of projects accessed the type of copious data sets now publicly available. In AO2 the level of referencing and secondary source analysis expected is no less than in Unit 1. Bibliographies must contain literature analysis and evidence of critical selection of sources. There should also be evidence of the thinking behind any questionnaire design and evidence of understanding, rather than just use, of any mathematical methods is needed.

It is good to see risk assessments being carried out and included in the planning of the projects; in most cases this would be expected.

Nearly all projects seen this Series matched level 3 criteria, and showed evidence of the basic format and depth expected from the proscribed number of guided learning hours at this level. A couple of new Centres had not perhaps appreciated the importance of the Proposal stage and the need for a detailed Log to be kept of the iterative journey undertaken.

