

Exemplar Independent Investigation Proposal Form – No.4



AO comment (Title): The teacher does well to query inconsistencies and the need for greater independence from the student. Importantly the teacher does not provide the answers. It is important that students are encouraged to think of investigations that go beyond their previous fieldwork experiences. Unfortunately, the teacher has missed an opportunity to offer further guidance on the title and planned hypothesis/questions. The student's title is self-limiting as it doesn't include a statement, question or hypothesis that is open to evaluation.

This title is very similar to what we did when we did our practice together in the town just before the summer holidays. Is there a way you can both add a little more individuality to it and a slightly tighter title?

AO comment (Focus): The teacher has provided general guidance that enables the student to pinpoint relevant spec content. However, the student should outline how the title links to the spec content in their own words, rather than simply detailing an area of the specification. The guidance on 'perceptions' is sound advice, which encourages the candidate to reflect on their sub-questions and methodology.

It's going to be critical to establish a clear definition and meaning of "good". You will need to do research to that effect. I'm curious as to why you have used the word "good" here for your focus whilst in the report you've read they refer to "happiness"?

I think that you have a sufficient range of primary data collection techniques here, as long as they are well executed...

If you are doing interviews, do you want to ask people along roads? Interviews are difficult so you will need to read about creating an interview schedule, for example. Read some back issues of Geography Review.

The smileometer sounds great. But how does it work? Is it qualitative or quantitative? How might you present this information, and what are the possible analysis opportunities?

If you look at the specification, then I think you are looking at Enquiry Question 2 (p.37). I think there are some ideas in here that will help you narrow the focus and perhaps form a tighter link to the work that we have studied in class. This would be good, since you already have some supporting notes and resources linked to this bit of the course that are useful background reading.

Just make sure this is manageable, and that the research / secondary data and information is really used to give context and to inform the investigation, rather than to act as a 'focus'. In some instances it can be a distraction.

Candidate name	Candidate number	Examination Series	
Centre name		Centre number	
Investigation title <i>People's perceptions of Shrewsbury</i>		How the title links to specification content <i>Paper 2, Diverse Places.</i>	
Planned investigation hypothesis or question/sub-questions <i>(1) Is Shrewsbury a good place to live? (2) How are there differences in perceptions between local people and visitors?</i>			
Investigation focus – indication of how the enquiry will enable the candidate to address their investigation title and explore their theme in relation to the chosen geographical area. <i>A report has named Shrewsbury as the 8th Happiest Place in the UK. I will use this as a basis for my research and look up how happy is worked out. I might also look to see if secondary data, e.g. Census and IMD shows spatial differences in happiness. I will think about published data and try to find it if it has any limitations. Part of Diverse Places is lived experience of place, so I will focus research in this area to help me understand the geographical background to the issue.</i>			
Planned methodology – indication of qualitative and/or quantitative techniques including primary and, if relevant, secondary data collection techniques, indication of the planned sampling strategy or strategies. <i>Questionnaires, interviews and a smileometer. Stratified transect in different parts of the town, along roads. Secondary data will be selected information from the census (2011) and I will use GIS to present this.</i>		Individual: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Group data collection: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher's approval and comments <i>You have devised an innovative methodology and have clearly considered the research you need to undertake... but at the moment you should consider whether your title and research questions fit closely enough with your investigation focus and methodology. "People's perceptions of Shrewsbury" is a fairly all-encompassing title; what precisely are you investigating?</i>		Approved: <input type="checkbox"/>	Not approved: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher signature		Date	

AO comment (Methodology): The teacher inappropriately asks a specific question about the data collection sites, which could be interpreted as a leading question and the teacher goes on to name a specific journal for the student to explore their data collection techniques. The suggestions in red are specific guidance that should be disclosed on the marking form as this level of support could constitute malpractice. The teacher is right to question how the smileometer technique might work, and the student should be encouraged to give further detail about the purpose of the interviews, sampling and types of questions to be asked.

The census data is going to be very important. Remember how we talked about using Output areas as design frameworks when we looked at our urban fieldwork? Using ArcGIS Online will allow you to get that data visually, but can you also use the software to perform any statistical analysis? Look again at the mark-scheme for this area of the investigation. You should think about creating the opportunities for high quality analysis.

AO comment (Methodology): The teacher acts as 'facilitator' by providing generic guidance about manageability. But specific guidance is provided about using 'Output areas' for the student's own investigation, undermining the student's independence. In addition naming a specific GIS software to present data and then asking whether that software could perform statistical analysis is not permissible.