

Exemplar Independent Investigation Proposal Form – No.1



AO comment (Title): It is considered malpractice to suggest a title for a student. Students should develop their own titles, with the teacher only offering generic guidance, which enables the student to maintain independence throughout the investigation. The teacher could ask more pointed questions, e.g. “what do you hope to achieve by mapping and analysing these glacial features? It might be clearer if you phrase it as an overall aim or question rather than simply saying what you are doing...”.

I would suggest creating a title that better reflects the nature of your study as it is not absolutely clear what you are setting out to achieve, such as; ‘To what extent does geomorphological evidence prove the provenance of Glacial Extent in the Newlands Valley’. This however would need further breakdown within the hypothesis and sub questions, which were not well exemplified.

Unfortunately, what looks good and achievable on paper may be too much in reality. The formation and orientation of the corries you have described will take some time to complete by a single individual and would be best split into teams of two.

The measurements of moraines and orientations should be straightforward but sediment analysis can only be done on exposed sites because digging in these areas would require an auger (which is not permitted and would not produce the desired results in any case).

The analysis of data needs more explanation in terms of sampling strategies; How do you plan to undertake sediment analysis for instance? Try to look into the techniques and skills we have learnt in class/previous field-trips and decide which would best match, remember what you are trying to prove and what outcomes you wish to achieve.

AO comment (Methodology): The teacher has rightly questioned the student’s planned data analysis and gives the student the opportunity to work out the right approach. The teacher has however given specific guidance on splitting the data collection into two teams of students and using a specific piece of equipment. This guidance does not allow the student to find a solution to the data collection issues independently. The teacher has missed an opportunity to question the breadth of the student’s methodology, which might improve the student’s ability to successfully collect the required data in the time available.

AO comment (Other): It is important that students don’t become too reliant on collecting data in large groups in case there aren’t enough students choosing investigations on a similar topic. Students will need to be reminded of the stages of the investigation where collaborative and independent work are permitted.

Candidate name		Candidate number		Examination Series	
Centre name				Centre number	
Investigation title			How the title links to specification content		
Mapping and analysis of features in the Newlands Valley, Lake District with concentration on the Cirques under the summit of Robinson.			The formation of landforms due to ice sheet scouring and the influence of differential geology. The assemblage of landforms can be used to reconstruct former ice extent and provenance.		
Planned investigation hypothesis or question/sub-questions					
That all cirques in the valley were created in a North Easterly facing direction. That the glacial features within the valley of Newlands (constrained by Grasmoor and Dale Head) can be mapped and analysed to show the glacial extent of the glacier.					
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.					
It is my aim to find significant features within the valley including moraines, U shaped valleys, truncated spurs and roches moutonnées. These will along with sediment analysis help to show the direction of flow of the glacier and may even go to prove provenance.					
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.				Individual: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Use of OS maps and drift geology maps to indicate direction of movement and sediment types. Mapping of cirques via the use of pacing (length and breadth). Height and angle of the back walls via maps, GPS and Clinometers				Group data collection: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Orientation via maps and compass. Research through secondary data from work undertaken by Manchester University and Manchester Geography Society.					
Teacher’s approval and comments				Approved: <input type="checkbox"/>	
There is a great deal here which warrants investigation and you have certainly entered into the spirit of the investigation. However, I still have a number of questions that need resolving before you undertake the fieldwork. It is important that you consider the time constraints we will have on the field-trip, as well as your access to the required equipment and the extra people required to collect all the data.				Not approved: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Teacher signature				Date	

AO comment (Title): The student has chosen a very broad title to investigate, which creates challenges in terms of data collection and adhering to the recommended word count. The teacher has missed an opportunity to offer further guidance. The student’s title is self-limiting as it doesn’t include a statement, question or hypothesis that is open to evaluation. The teacher inappropriately suggests a clearer title, but they are right to suggest a more limited investigation that is more achievable in the time available, and one that is more open to evaluation.

Although you have indicated that you will be concentrating on the cirques in your investigation title, you have also mentioned several other features such as moraines, U shaped valleys, truncated spurs and roches moutonnées... Can you be clearer about why you are aiming to find these additional features? Your methodology seems to focus on the cirques so I’m not entirely sure how you are aiming to find these features.