Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

June 2011

GCE Travel and Tourism (6989)
Unit 3: Destination Europe

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General Introduction

Centres are strongly advised to access the reports available for each series on the Edexcel website www.edexcel.com or follow this link: http://www.edexcel.com/quals/gce/app-gce/travel/Pages/default.aspx .

Reports for coursework units are within the Examiner Reports section and are available for each of the past series. They include detailed suggestions on how weaknesses can be overcome, including classroom activities designed to improve performance.

Centres that have been moderated will also find moderator reports available within their centres via the exams office. Moderators endeavour to produce informative reports that are individualised and offer specific guidance on the accuracy of marking.

The contents of this report:

- Candidate performance

- Accuracy of the marking

- Improving performance

- For each Task A (AO1) – Task B (AO2) – Task C (AO3) – Task D (AO4)

  a. Assessment evidence requirements
  b. Common weaknesses, good practice

- Administration

Candidate performance

The majority of work submitted continued to be, in the main, well organised and the assessment evidence was generally easy to find. Work was accompanied by appropriate supporting documentation including mark record sheets, assessor feedback sheets and authentication statements.

More detailed and appropriate annotation was also present on many samples. Annotation of coursework is now a JCQ requirement and should be present showing how marks have been awarded.

It was pleasing to see evidence in candidates' work showing that some centres had acted upon feedback given either through the moderator's reports to centres or from the Principal Moderator's Reports for previous series.

Task A

Maps tended to include a smaller number of destinations and showed that the 'most important' destinations had been selected. Some maps continued to be difficult to interpret, having lots of symbols and numerical keys, especially where the outline map used was quite small. There was more evidence of candidates showing routes to access each individual destination located; however, in the main many still gave all possible transport routes rather than simply showing the most relevant to that category. Many candidates tended to locate airports and did not show other gateways in the UK or Europe. Where separate maps of gateways in the UK were submitted these were not linked to show access to the European destinations located and/or the category. These issues have been well documented on past Principal Moderator Reports where further clarification can be found. Emerging destinations tended to be highlighted more frequently this series. There continued to be some misunderstanding of the purpose built and heritage and cultural categories for instance where candidates located historical attractions.

In the explanation of how features are used to place destinations into different categories there was more evidence of sound explanations with good use of examples of specific features. Some candidates however, approached this task by describing two or three destinations and their features, and did not address categorisation. There was more evidence of candidates attempting to explain the difficulties encountered largely through describing overlaps; however some gave more detailed explanations showing a good level of understanding.

Task B

There continued to be misunderstanding of the task requirements in this task and it was disappointing to see that many candidates continued to struggle to achieve the higher marks available.

Whilst there was some evidence of centres acting upon feedback given, for many the starting point of the task seemed to be the pen portrait rather than the appeal of the selected destination. This then meant that candidates approached this as one task not two. They tended to consider features in terms of the tourist in the pen portrait only. Whilst the choice of destination may be determined by the needs of the tourists, once the destination is chosen, the pen portrait should be put to one side. The first task is to research the *key* features that give the destination appeal to different types of customers. This information should form the first part of the task and should be a description. However, there continued to be more evidence this series that more candidates considered the appeal of the destination to different types of tourists which was encouraging.

Where the two aspects of the task were merged, descriptions lacked detail and explanations tended to be simplistic and brief.

Another issue with regards to task B was that many pen portraits used were inappropriate and only provided straightforward needs and wants in relation

to a holiday. Candidates then wrote about the components of a selected package holiday with 'best time to fly', 'best accommodation' etc rather than focusing on the features of the destination.

Task C

There were improvements in that research evidence was included by many candidates. However, for the majority, evidence of research remained limited to just one source, the Internet, and in many instances evidence of research was provided for task C only. On the whole, very little referencing was seen, with the odd exception where there was in fact referencing within the body of the text which is recommended for consideration of higher marks. Past reports, particularly June 2010, give guidance on techniques that can be used to help candidates to use more than one source for their research, in particular for task A. Evidence of the level of independence was provided through research logs and statements from candidates for some centres, many however gave no evidence of the level of independence.

In the analysis there were fewer instances of disjointed accounts simply quoting information from internet sources. Some detailed analyses were seen although many focused on why the destination was popular rather than looking at the growth in popularity. Controllable factors continued to be a weak area with evidence of poor understanding. Candidates should consider the factors that can be controlled by the destination itself to maximise popularity and appeal. For example: through the creation of tourism departments/ministers; tourism planning; regeneration; attracting inward investment; local authority planning; infrastructure improvements; tax incentives; increased promotion through attendance at exhibitions, etc.

Task D

Achievement of this task has been relatively good over past series. In this series, however, some pen portraits and journey details did not provide opportunities to achieve the higher marks. For instance some gave departure points in the UK; others contained limited needs in terms of travelling; some were inappropriate where they required stop-offs en-route and hotel recommendations or were unnecessarily complicated; others restricted the consideration of a range of transport options such as 'won't fly and can't drive'. The journey from Barcelona to Florence as featured in the unit specification was used by many, however, as documented in past reports this journey is now possible by direct flights and does not fully offer any difficulty in access and alternative departure and arrival destinations should be considered.

On the whole many candidates gave an assessment although some still just gave advantages and disadvantages. The key weakness was not considering a range of factors and so accounts often lacked detail. The factors given in the specification should be assessed for suitability, for each mode against the needs and circumstances of the tourists. Some gave generic assessments and this is not appropriate factors should be researched for the actual journey being considered. Some candidates did

not offer a recommendation of the most suitable mode based on their assessments.

Accuracy of Marking

Generally, marking still tended to be generous although there was some evidence that the '*best fit*' assessment model was being applied. Details of how to apply the best fit model are well documented in previous reports.

Candidate evidence should be assessed solely against the criteria in the specification. The tasks to be completed are detailed on p36 of the unit specification, Assessment Evidence. For each task there are three marks bands.

NOTE: The mark band statements do not set the tasks, they outline the assessment criteria. When task requirements are not met (e.g. Task B), this limits achievement.

As seen in the last few series, there was some evidence of harsh marking within Mark Band 1(MB1). Marks below the mid/entry point are appropriate if there is little evidence that meets the assessment criteria. If a task is incomplete or missing these weaknesses can be balanced against any strengths in evidence.

Task A

Overall marking was slightly generous for this task. Weaknesses on the maps were often the accuracy of the locations of destinations and lack of detail. Also transport routes and gateways shown were not 'appropriate' (i.e. relevant to the category) and labels absent. In the explanation, whilst examples of destinations and features are required to access higher marks they should be used to *support* the explanation. The inclusion of examples does not move the work into higher mark bands it is the explanation that is the discriminating factor.
Mark Band 2 (MB2) is best fit where maps have detail, accuracy and relevant routes are shown to each 'key' destination and where there is explanation of categorisation with reference to features that include examples, and where there is also explanation of difficulties with examples.

Task B

Marking of this task was generous, particularly where specification requirements on p36 were not met. As mentioned previously, the two elements of the tasks were often merged and this hinders achievement of the higher mark bands. There was little evidence of discrimination of *key* features and consideration of the destination's appeal to different types of tourist was not evident in many cases. Explanations were often brief and/or descriptive. Some tended to explain the suitability of a holiday, rather than how the destination features met the needs. Needs were mainly straightforward. MB2 can only be considered if the key features have been described in detail and there are clear links between features and the needs

of the tourist in the explanation. Where needs are straightforward rather than complex, this is a weakness and marks from the lower end of MB2 would be appropriate.

Task C

Marking of this task was slightly generous. This task requires evidence of *research and analysis.* Marking tended to be most generous where the research evidence had significant weaknesses. For instance where the research element was at MB1, i.e. sources were limited (mainly Internet/websites) and evidence of independence was not included. Mark Band 2 requires candidates to use different types of sources for their research. For this mark band, candidates are also required to have conducted independent research. See comments regarding type of evidence required in the following section. In terms of research, for MB2, candidates should also reference their sources. Evidence tended to have some analysis, yet coverage of controllable factors was superficial. This is a weakness at MB2. It is not required that evidence must clearly meet all requirements of MB2 to gain marks from MB2. However, for MB2 to be considered best fit, there should be more of MB2 met than MB1.

Task D

Marking in this task tended to be more accurate as the evidence tends to be fully in line with specification requirements. This task requires *assessment*. For many samples, MB2 was best fit for evidence that was clearly *an assessment of a range* of factors and modes of transport where *complex* needs had been considered and there was some *difficulty* in access to the destination. For marks at MB2 and MB3, the destination should have some difficulty in access and some complex needs. Theoretical assessments, not related to tourists' needs, should limit the marks awarded.

Improving performance

Centres are strongly advised to obtain copies of Principal Moderator/Examiner Reports of previous series (www.edexcel.com) as these contain lots of suggestions for classroom activities and ideas to help improve candidate performance in each task. Follow this link to access reports: http://www.edexcel.com/quals/gce/app-gce/travel/Pages/default.aspx .

Some suggestions are summarised in the next section under the heading 'Good Practice'.

Assessment evidence

The tasks for the unit are set within the specification. There are no requirements for how evidence of completing these tasks is presented except that in task A maps are required.

There are four tasks for the unit as shown on p36 of the specification.
Each task targets one of the Assessment Objectives (AOs) for the qualification. These AOs are given on p166 of the specification.

Task A

Assessment Evidence Requirements

This task targets Assessment Objective 1 (AO1): the candidate's knowledge and understanding.

It is in three parts:

- *Six* maps, *one for each category of destination* (listed on page 33 of the specification). Each map should locate the appropriate European travel destinations popular with UK tourists and highlight the relevant gateways, road and rail routes from the UK.
- For *each category* of destination, an *explanation of the features* that differentiate them with examples.
- An *explanation* of the difficulties in categorising some destinations, with examples.

Task A - AO1

The evidence expected for this task would be:

1. Six maps - one for each type of destination.
2. Destinations to be located are those that are 'key', i.e. most popular. For instance the 'Top 10 City Break Destinations'. Candidates should discriminate between all possible destinations in a category and those that are 'key'.
3. If 'symbols' are used they should be an appropriate size in relation to the scale of the map. For instance a small, discreet dot could be used for all categories, except 'areas' which should be shown as a defined area.
4. The most appropriate transport route/s and gateways used by UK tourists to reach **each destination located.** Maps do not need to show ALL possible routes and gateways. Candidates should demonstrate that they understand how tourists access each destination by only showing the routes and gateways appropriate to the category. The transport method tourists use to access coastal areas will not be the same as for countryside areas. UK gateways and those in Europe should be labelled as should road/rail routes.
5. Emerging destinations, if shown, should be clearly highlighted to show that they have recently become popular.
6. Other details shown should be relevant to the category of destination; for instance, for 'coastal areas' it could be expected that the seas and oceans are labelled; that air travel would be most appropriate to access many coastal destinations and so airports located would be named in full.

7. An explanation of how features are used to differentiate categories. The features are listed on p34 of the specification in topic 3.2. Candidates would not be expected to refer to all types of features for each category as some will not be important. For example, in countryside areas, landscape could be considered the most important feature in categorising the type of destination. In their explanation, examples of landscapes in the countryside destinations located will be used to support explanations.
8. The evidence for each category will demonstrate that candidates have identified the features that differentiate destinations selected and that they understand that all destinations placed in that category share common features. For instance at the simplest level that all coastal areas share a common landscape feature of being on the coast.
9. An explanation of the difficulties of using features to categorise destinations.
10. Clear reference to features and examples of specific features in specific destinations to support explanations.

Task A - AO1

The common weaknesses hindering achievement:

- Maps that show 'obscure' destinations rather than the most popular.
- The location of countryside areas on maps. They are either vague, inaccurate or else mountain ranges and not appropriate.
- Some candidates are still including too many destinations leading to indecipherable maps and complex keys.
- Maps without labels that rely upon complicated numbering/alphabetical codes and keys with place names and labels on separate sheets.
- Maps showing European rail and road networks without labels; where access to destinations and relevance of transport method has not been considered. As in the last series, candidates are still unnecessarily showing all possible transport routes for each destination category. They should choose the most appropriate transport methods and relevant gateways for each category.
- Where separate maps of UK networks and gateways are included, they do not show how to access destinations located.
- Maps that show UK gateways but European gateways are not shown or vice versa
- Explanations do not always relate to the features as given in the unit specification.
- Detailed descriptions of destinations rather than explaining how features are used to categorise destinations.
- The lack the detail and reasoning (needed to access mark band 3) in the explanation of the difficulties found in the differentiation of categories, many were just one short paragraph.

Good practice that helps achievement:

- Clear labels on the maps themselves - destination names, names of roads, airports etc. It is clear that some candidates plan the layout and labelling of their maps by researching destinations and routes first to decide on an appropriate size of map and labels.

- Where emerging destinations are underlined or given a different symbol linked to a key to show 'recently popular'.

- Examples are used to support explanations of difficulties with reference to specific features of the destinations that overlap.

Task B

Assessment Evidence Requirements

This task targets Assessment Objective 2 (AO2): the candidate's ability to apply their skills and understanding.

It is in two parts:

- A *description* of the *key features* that give the selected European travel destination *appeal* to different *types* of tourists.
- An *explanation* of how the recommended *destination* meets the needs of a tourist whose needs and circumstances are given to the candidate by the tutor in the form of a pen portrait.

The emphasis of this task is key features of destinations and their link to appeal. It assesses whether candidates can apply their knowledge of key features and appeal to one destination and whether they can make recommendations to show that the destination is suitable in meeting tourists' needs. The candidates should be provided with a pen portrait that offers opportunities to consider complex as well as straightforward needs and circumstances.

A destination, not an island or country, should be chosen, this should belong to one of the categories of destinations used in task A.

Candidates should research the features of their selected destination. They need to discriminate between features that exist and those that contribute to appeal. They need to concentrate on these '*key*' features (i.e. those that contribute to appeal).

Task B - AO2

The evidence for this task would:

1. Be submitted as two quite distinct parts.
2. Identify the **key features** of the selected destination that contribute to appeal.
3. Describe the **key features** of the selected destination that contribute to appeal.

4. Make reference to the appeal of the selected destination and its key features to the **different types of tourists** as given in the unit specification on page 34. This should NOT relate to the tourists in the pen portrait.
5. Include a **separate** and clear explanation of how the destination and its features meet the needs of the tourists as outlined in the pen portrait.
6. Include **links between specific features** at the destination and tourists' needs.
7. Explain how, for the higher marks, complex needs have been met.

Task B - AO2

The common weaknesses hindering achievement:

- The description and explanation are merged – resulting in descriptions that lack detail and limited explanations.
- The appeal of features at the destination to different types of tourists is not considered in the description.
- There is too much emphasis on the pen portrait, which is only one aspect. Within the description reference to the pen portrait should not be given.
- Key features that contribute to appeal are not discriminated. Some describe all features in the selected destination rather than those that are 'key' in giving appeal.
- Many pen portraits still refer to recommending a holiday and evidence relates to the components of a holiday. For example - under the feature 'accommodation' they select suitable accommodation rather than considering the destination's provision of accommodation.
- Complexity is not clearly addressed.

Features are given in the unit specification, see 3.2, page 34.
Different types of tourists are suggested in the unit specification, see 3.3, page 34. Examples of pen portraits with complex needs are found on pages 44 and 42.

Task B - AO2

Good practice that helps achievement:

- Including an introduction to the description in which the key features are identified with an indication of why other features do not contribute to the appeal of the destination. This makes it apparent that key features have been discriminated and higher mark bands could be considered.

- Evidence of understanding and application is shown most convincingly where there is less reliance on 'screen shots' and candidates use 'their own words'.

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Task C

Assessment Evidence Requirements

This task targets Assessment Objective 3 (AO3): the candidate's ability to research and analyse.

The task is in TWO parts:

Evidence of research undertaken for *all* tasks A,B,C and D.

An analysis of the factors that have **led to the growth** in popularity and appeal of *one* European travel destination **including an analysis** of how the destination has controlled factors to maximise their appeal and popularity.

Task C - AO3

The evidence expected for this task would include:

1. Evidence of research for *all tasks* A, B, C and D.
2. A bibliography for each task indicating the sources of information used for research.
3. Referencing of sources used within the work submitted for *each* task.
4. The level of independent working; for higher marks evidence of independent research from the candidate endorsed by the assessor.
5. Evidence to show that a range of sources have been used e.g. maps, trade journals, newspaper articles, brochures and travel guides or from primary sources such as guest speakers/interviews. Details should be in the referencing of work as well as bibliographies.
6. A selected destination that belongs to one of the types given in the unit specification.
7. A selected destination that has recently become popular, for the higher mark bands to be considered.
8. An analysis of how each factor has contributed to the **growth** in the popularity and appeal of the destination (suggested factors can be found on p35 of the specification, 3.4).
9. An analysis of the factors that can be controlled by the destination itself to maximise popularity and appeal; for instance in terms of government and local authority planning, improvements to infrastructure, regeneration, tax incentives, attracting inward investment, tourism planning, publicity, exhibitions etc.

Task C - AO3

The common weaknesses hindering achievement:

- There continues to be an over-reliance on the Internet for research. Centres are reminded that lots of websites constitute one source of information and higher marks are not appropriate.

- Referencing tends to be found only in task C and is limited to identifying sources.
- Research is evidenced by many through bibliographies alone.
- Candidates do not provide sufficient evidence to show independent research.
- Evidence of independence often relies on a comment on the assessor feedback sheets. This is not appropriate if higher mark bands are to be considered; where independence should be made clear by the candidate.
- Some candidates do not analyse the '**growth**' in the popularity and appeal and tend to explain or describe why the destination is popular.
- Many candidates provide a mainly superficial analysis of how the destination had controlled factors to maximise their popularity and appeal. Some are still incorrectly referring to Destination Management Companies, though this does seem to be less evident.
- Candidates tend to approach each factor in isolation. They tend not to consider the overall effect on the growth in popularity and appeal; or the relationships between factors and consequences.
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In June 2006, moderators accepted a statement from the assessor that the candidate obtained sources independently. The Principal Moderator's reports since have stated that in the future, **evidence must be more detailed to access marks beyond the mid/entry point of Mark Band 2.** This could be a detailed statement from the candidate endorsed by the assessor that indicates how the sources were obtained and what help, if any, was provided to confirm that research was conducted independently.

It is not expected that candidates use the Harvard referencing system precisely although some similar format with detail would be expected.

Good practice that helps achievement:

- Bibliographies that are detailed, showing date of research and usefulness.

- Candidates that include referencing within the body of the text itself rather than just stating a source.

- Use of a footnote system to show referencing.

- Evidence that shows independent research – research logs and statements.

- Referencing that clearly gives details of different sources being accessed, not just the Internet.

- Where there is a structure to the analysis with an introduction and conclusion.

- The analysis of controllable factors is presented under a separate heading.

- A useful technique is to identify the factors that are controllable and use this as the starting point for the analysis.

Task D

Quality of Written Communication is assessed in this task.

Assessment Evidence Requirements

This task targets Assessment Objective 4 (AO4): the candidate's ability to evaluate, draw reasoned conclusions and make justified recommendations.

There is only one element:

An assessment of the suitability of different modes of transport to *ONE* European travel destination for a tourist whose needs and circumstances have been given to the candidate in the form of a pen portrait. This will include details of their departure point and destination.

Task D - AO4

The evidence expected for this task should:

1. Assess different modes of transport against the factors outlined on p35 in topic 3.3 of the specification.
2. Relate to how a tourist gets from a departure point to a destination.
3. Consider the entire journey from the tourists' home to the departure point gateway and also from the arrival point to the actual destination.
4. Relate to the needs of the tourist as outlined in the pen portrait.
5. Consider for suitability all modes of transport for the journey against different factors such as those given in the unit specification (p35) overall journey time, costs, safety, convenience, security, etc. Each factor should be matched against the tourists' needs.
6. Assess ALL modes of transport even when it may be clear that some will not be suitable.
7. Give reasons for any unsuitability in terms of transport modes considered.
8. Make recommendations for one mode of transport that is justified in terms of 'the extent to which' the factors considered meet the tourists' needs.

Task D - A04

The common weaknesses hindering achievement:

- Giving *'advantages and disadvantages'* for each transport option. This is not appropriate for an evaluation.
- Many candidates still did not consider suitability in meeting needs against **a range of factors** but focused only on costs and time.
- Reference to 'factors' was not always clear.
- Recommendations of where to stay, descriptions of hotels. This is completely irrelevant to this task and should not be included.
- **Unsuitable pen portraits**, for example, complicated journeys rather than complex needs.

Please note that centres often use the examples given in the specification guidance (p45 Assessment Guidance – (d) mark band 3). However the travel and tourism industry is dynamic and constantly changing. A popular journey used to meet the Mark Band 3 criteria is the one from ***Barcelona to Florence***. At the time the specification was written, direct flights were not possible. Now that they are, centres are advised to select a different journey where direct flights are not possible to present candidates the challenge of 'some difficulty in access' and meet Mark Band 3 requirements. It is pleasing to note that this advice has been accepted by many centres and suitable alternatives were seen.

Good practice that helps achievement:

- Demonstrating assessment with the use of linking statements and phrases, e.g.
    - *'this will be suitable because'*
    - *'this means that'*
    - *'I don't think this would be comfortable and is totally unsuitable'*
    - *'this is good because it means'*

- Using a structured format for the assessment. For each mode considered, subheadings of each factor are given and candidates are able to assess suitability against each factor guided by the headings.

- Where the pen portrait details are included with the evidence and the departure point and destination is clearly stated.

- Where candidates include an 'introduction' that identifies the complex needs of the tourists in terms of travel.

Administration

OPTEMS forms were completed correctly.

Candidates and assessors are required to sign the Mark Record Sheets to confirm the authenticity of candidates' work. Assessors should ensure, therefore, that where additional support has been provided to a candidate, or where a candidate has made overuse of printed material from internet sites or large sections from text books, these are not credited.

If the samples identified do not include work with the highest or lowest mark these should be supplied.

Many centres submitted task feedback sheets as provided on the Edexcel website. This was useful to show how assessment decisions have been reached.

Annotation on coursework to show how assessment decisions have been reached is now a JCQ requirement. Annotation should focus on the Mark Band descriptors and key evidence.

General Comments

Edexcel does not require candidates to submit their portfolios in a file, or plastic wallets. It is sufficient for candidates to provide all work tied with treasury tags, providing it can be easily identified and accessed. In addition to the Candidate Authentication, there should ideally be a front cover stating name of candidate, centre and candidate number. Evidence for each task should be clearly separated, ideally by a task feedback sheet.

Only evidence used to determine the mark awarded need be submitted in a portfolio. That evidence should be for tasks A, B, C and D.

This unit allows the opportunity for oral communication in presenting a suitable destination to a customer. If this format is used, all supporting evidence such as visual aids, notes, documentation etc. must be included. Candidates' portfolios should include the assessment checklist or observation statement and a detailed witness testimony (exemplars can be found on the Edexcel website). The assessor should describe the candidate's performance in detail to clearly justify the marks awarded. Statements should relate to the task requirements and the mark band criteria. This evidence should be signed and dated by the assessor.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx