

OXFORD CAMBRIDGE AND RSA EXAMINATIONS
Advanced Subsidiary GCE

GENERAL STUDIES
THE SCIENTIFIC DOMAIN (COURSEWORK)
JUNE 2006

2963/AS

OPEN ON RECEIPT

Additional materials:
Information for Centres 2963/IT
Resource Booklet 2963/RB

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

- Assignment Theme: 'Matters of Growth'.
- The total number of available marks for this assignment is 90.

This assignment consists of 3 printed pages and 1 blank page.

Guidance for candidates

The assignment for Unit 2963 comprises 30% of the AS award and 15% of the A-level. Your assignment should reflect the scientific content of the unit:

- characteristics of the sciences (physical, life and earth);
- understanding of scientific methods, principles, criteria and their applications;
- mathematical reasoning and its application.

Assignment Brief – Matters of Growth

Investigate an appropriate problem associated with one of the following areas and submit a report of your findings.

Wherever possible the investigation should incorporate both primary and secondary data and should include an example which you know well.

Your complete report should **not exceed** 2000 words.

These topics are provided as a guide. Other topics within the theme of ‘Matters of Growth’ are acceptable. It is possible that some assignments may include more than one of the suggested topics. This is also acceptable.

Growth and the environment

Suggested topics under this heading include:

- Alternative energy – why is the growth of wind farms such a controversial issue?
- Air / noise pollution – the growth in car traffic has caused an increase in these types of pollution.
- Environmental contamination – the growth in the redevelopment of brown field sites brings with it issues of pollution.

Growth and the animal and plant kingdoms

Suggested topics under this heading include:

- Responses to physical factors – does the pH of soil affect the growth rate of a plant?
- Responses to human interference – do conservation policies have an effect on the growth of animal populations? What are the effects of leaving tree trunks to rot on a woodland floor?
- The growth in outdoor activities such as walking and mountain biking – what is the impact on a popular footpath or bridleway? What effects does trampling have on plant populations?

Growth and human health and fitness

Suggested topics under this heading include:

- Fitness clubs – their recent growth is a sign of general concern regarding health and fitness. How is their growth associated with factors such as age and gender?
- Obesity – identified as a growing health hazard in the UK. How is it linked to factors such as age and gender within your school or college?
- Growth in alternative medicine / vitamin supplements – to what extent are people turning to options such as these? What are their reasons?

You should discuss with your teacher whether your proposed investigation will enable you to meet the assessment criteria for the coursework assignment. **If you adopt a problem-solving approach by generating a question or hypothesis for investigation, you are more likely to be successful than if you simply produce a descriptive account.** You may well use ideas gained from your other studies, but remember this is an assignment for General Studies and you will need to discuss the wider issues and implications of your investigation.

Specification of responses

Project reports should normally include:

- a title;
- a review of evidence and the development of a focus, question, issue or hypothesis;
- a plan of the way in which the investigation proceeded;
- clearly defined technological concepts or models;
- coherent use of appropriate technological terms;
- clear tabulation of any data collected;
- analysis of the issues raised;
- appropriate illustrative material such as graphs, charts, statistics, and photographs;
- clarification both of dilemmas raised and tests of significance applied;
- critical analysis of the scientific methods used and the recognition of facts and opinions;
- relevant conclusions and the reliability of results;
- a list of source materials used (which may include the Internet and CD Rom).

Submission of your assignment

Make sure your name and centre number are on each page of your assignment.

Put your work in order and number all pages. Prepare a contents page and a short synopsis.

If you wish to use your assignment as Key Skills evidence, you should keep an electronic or hard copy.

Hand your completed assignment to your teacher.

BLANK PAGE

Permission to reproduce items where third-party owned material protected by copyright is included has been sought and cleared where possible. Every reasonable effort has been made by the publisher (OCR) to trace copyright holders, but if any items requiring clearance have unwittingly been included, the publisher will be pleased to make amends at the earliest possible opportunity.

OCR is part of the Cambridge Assessment Group. Cambridge Assessment is the brand name of University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES), which is itself a department of the University of Cambridge.