

GCSE



**Chief Examiner's and
Principal Moderator's Report**
**Agriculture and
Land Use**

Summer Series 2022



Foreword

This booklet outlines the performance of candidates in all aspects of this specification for the Summer 2022 series.

CCEA hopes that the Chief Examiner's and/or Principal Moderator's report(s) will be viewed as a helpful and constructive medium to further support teachers and the learning process.

This booklet forms part of the suite of support materials for the specification. Further materials are available from the specification's microsite on our website at www.ccea.org.uk.

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GCSE Agriculture and Land Use

Chief Examiner's Report

Subject Overview

The number of candidates and centres completing GCSE Agriculture and Land Use continues to increase as the qualification becomes more popular.

It is pleasing to report that the papers in the Summer 2022 series provided further evidence of high-quality learning and teaching of the CCEA GCSE Agriculture and Land Use qualification. The level of knowledge and skills shown in answers, particularly the extended writing questions, was commendable throughout and highlights the enthusiasm for the specification and the wealth of agricultural knowledge out there.

In both Units 1 and 2 some candidates found one of the extended writing questions more demanding. With the extended writing questions, as in previous years, the candidates who achieved high marks, highlighted the key words in the bullet points and planned their extended writing question in the space before attempting an answer.

In the extended writing questions candidates should be encouraged to include all their 'correct' knowledge and not just eight or nine points as credit will not be given for similar answers. If the bullet point says to give at least three points then students should be aiming to give more than three so that if there are other 'gaps' in their answers, they can still achieve high marks. Some candidates left the extended writing questions blank; candidates should be encouraged to attempt all questions.

Assessment Unit AS 1 Soils, Crops and Habitats

Unit Overview

Candidates performed well and the paper allowed candidates to gain credit across a wide range of topics across the unit. There were plenty of short recall questions which allowed all candidates to gain credit along with more challenging questions to allow the higher ability candidates to show their knowledge. Candidates should be reminded that in short recall questions they should not 'list' answers in the hope that they get a correct answer. The language used in the questions was deemed to be appropriate as most candidates attempted all questions and there was no evidence that candidates ran out of time to complete the paper.

- Q1** Mostly answered very well by all candidates, however candidates should be reminded of the definition of an 'annual'.
- Q2** Some candidates struggled with graph skills and this should be practiced more in future. The rest of the question was answered well.
- Q3** Wide range of marks achieved in this question due to the recall nature of it.
- Q4** Most candidates answered this question well.
- Q5** Part (a) was a good discriminator as many candidates struggled to answer the question in terms of germination. Part (c) and (d) were answered well.
- Q6** Many candidates didn't attempt Part (a)(i), but the rest of the question was answered mostly well.

- Q7** Good discriminator which had a wide range of marks. Several candidates left the question blank and others unfortunately described other incorrect experiments. However, many achieved well in this question.
- Q8** Many candidates misunderstood the question and provided methods on how to increase runoff and increase flooding downstream. Candidates should be encouraged to read questions carefully before attempting their answer as they were asked about minimising flooding further downstream. Part (b)(ii) was answered well.
- Q9** Was attempted by most candidates and proved a good discriminator as a wide range of marks was achieved.

Assessment Unit 2 Animals on the Land

Unit Overview

Again, there were plenty of short recall questions which allowed all candidates to gain credit along with more challenging questions. Candidates should be reminded that in short recall questions they should not 'list' answers in the hope that they get a correct answer. The language used in the questions was deemed to be appropriate as most candidates attempted all questions there was no evidence of any time issues.

- Q1** Part (a) was answered well by most candidates, however some gave the feed category rather than the actual feed.
- Q2** Most candidates did well in this question. Some candidates are still confusing the terms 'hazard' and 'risk'. Hazard is the 'object' and 'risk' is what could happen.
- Q3** Answered well.
- Q4** Part (a)(i) was a calculation which many candidates found quite demanding. A minority of candidates gained full marks. If candidates show their working out, even if the final answer is incorrect, they can still achieve some of the marks available. In Part (a)(ii) many candidates achieved full marks but some struggled to construct a line graph and could not work out an appropriate scale.
- Q5** Part (a) wasn't answered well despite it being on previous papers with some candidates perhaps confusing 'annual' with daily milk yield. Part (b) was answered well mostly.
- Q6** Part (b) proved to be a good discriminator as many candidates struggled to give clear advantages and disadvantages. Candidates should be reminded to give more detail when answering discussion style questions, for example, 'it's expensive' or 'costs money' did not gain credit whilst 'it's expensive to build', did.
- Q7** The extended writing task was answered well with practical farm experience evident in responses, and many candidates achieved high marks in this question. Again, detail should be encouraged to and candidates should ensure they address all bullet points in the question.
- Q8** Part (a) was not answered well and proved to be quite demanding for some candidates with very few describing the process accurately. In Part (b) some candidates did not focus on the 'long distance' part despite this being emboldened in the question.
- Q9** Part (a) was answered well. In Part (b) many candidates demonstrated excellent knowledge and understanding and gave the many ways to assess the health of animals. Some candidates struggled to give clear benefits to the farmer of improved welfare and so were not able to achieve in the top Mark Band.

Principal Moderator's Report

Internal Assessment Overview

This year saw the first submission of the controlled assessment element of the GCSE Agriculture and Land Use under the Revised specification (first teaching September 2019).

The accuracy and consistency of marking is very encouraging with the vast majority of centres appropriately applying the assessment criteria. As in previous years (in the legacy specification), there is still a tendency for some candidates to ignore the word limit suggested for each task. While candidates are not penalised for being in excess of the word guidelines, they should be encouraged to adhere closely to it, with an excess of 10% suggested. Candidates should use appendices to include additional material they wished to submit as this material is not included in the word count. This practice is to be further encouraged.

General Administration

Centre administration continues to be generally excellent with only a few relatively minor administrative errors. The majority of centres continue to clearly annotate the submissions justifying the mark that was awarded to each section of each task and relate back to the marking criteria. All centres are encouraged to adopt this process. In some instances, however, it was difficult to ascertain the mark that had been awarded to a particular section of the task, or the total mark awarded to the task. The mark awarded for each section of each Task, and the task totals, should be clearly indicated on the candidate submissions. This will greatly assist both internal standardisation (if applicable) and the moderation process.

It is encouraging to see that most candidates included a contents page with their task submissions and submitted their controlled assessment tasks in the format as outlined in the Specification. This improves the structure of the submissions and greatly assists with the marking and moderation of each section. Unfortunately, a minority of candidates continue to present their submissions in a Power Point format. These candidates should be instructed to present their submissions in a written report format.

Assessment Unit 3 Contemporary Issues in Agriculture and Land Use

Unit Overview

Task 1 Practical Investigation

While all topics were attempted for the Practical Investigation (Task 1), 'Investigate factors affecting seed germination and seedling growth' was exceptionally popular. It is important that all aspects of the task title are addressed which in this example would be factors affecting seed germination and seedling growth. Analysis of silage and an evaluation of its feeding value was also fairly popular. The evaluation of habitats and biodiversity was not especially popular.

The principles of a controlled experiment were generally clearly understood with a clear appreciation of both dependent and independent variables demonstrated. As in previous years, candidates tended to overlook the need to justify the experimental methods used and tended to lose marks in this section. In a minority of cases, some candidates only produced results using one method (one factor) which limits the marks that can be awarded.

Some candidates only used one form of mathematical technique to process their data. Mark Band 4 in the Analysis and Conclusions section of Task 1 stipulates more than one form of mathematical technique to be used. This can generally be achieved by averaging appropriate data and conducting a percentage calculation on appropriate data. Unfortunately, some candidates still omit labels, titles and units from their graphs and tables and hence needlessly lose marks.

Candidates should be encouraged to state their results and trends and relate them to their hypothesis, for example, 'As temperature increased germination percentage increased and this is because...' etc. In some instances, candidates collected a lot of experimental data but then struggled to draw appropriate conclusions, linked back to their initial hypothesis and therefore could not achieve top marks in this section. As indicated in previous reports, in the evaluation section of Task 1 suggestions for further research should link directly to the primary topic of the investigation and not merely a topic an agricultural student would like to investigate, albeit remotely related.

Task 2 Research Project

All three Topics for the Research Project (Task 2) were attempted, however the 'Livestock Biosecurity' topic proved particularly popular. Irrespective of the title pursued it was evident that the candidates engaged well with the topics provided.

As in previous years, the Planning section tended to lack focus in some instances. Candidates need to focus on a specific topic and present information succinctly and in their own words. As in previous years there still tends to be some cut and paste in the planning sections. Candidates should be encouraged to do independent and relevant research, with secondary sources referenced and correctly used. It is important to emphasise that secondary sources cited by the candidates in this section should be specific to the topic and not of a general nature.

As per previous years, some candidates failed to provide any justification for their research methods used or an explanation of the procedures used. This limited the marks that could be awarded in this section.

It was again encouraging to see the interest and effort that many candidates went to in order to obtain primary data. The quality of some of the questionnaires produced was excellent as indeed was the presentation of the quantitative data gathered. It is important that questionnaires contain sufficient focused questions to allow 'detailed' information to be gathered on the topic. Teachers are directed to the support document "Guidance on Collecting Primary Data for Task 2" on the CCEA Agriculture and Land Use website for assistance in this area.

The graphical forms used to present the data must be appropriate to the nature of the data gathered. Mark Band 4 requires the use of more than one graphical form. Marks are still being lost by some candidates due to the absence of titles, labels, keys, and units.

The conclusion and evaluation sections are generally still the sections that some candidates find challenging. As in previous years, linking their findings (primary data) to the secondary data still proves difficult for many candidates in the conclusion section. Statements of how the information gathered from their primary data compares, agrees, or disagrees, with what is found in the secondary, published, sources are typically all that is required.

In the evaluation section, it is important that suggestions for further research are specific and are directly linked to the primary topic with some logical details of how they would do this. There is still a tendency for the conclusion and evaluation sections to be generously marked in some centres.

Contact details

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