



**Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit
State Examinations Commission**

LEAVING CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION 2012

GEOGRAPHY

ORDINARY LEVEL CHIEF EXAMINER'S REPORT

HIGHER LEVEL CHIEF EXAMINER'S REPORT

CONTENTS

1.	General Introduction	3
	1.1 The Syllabus	3
	1.2 The Examination	3
	1.3 The Candidature	4
2.	Ordinary Level	5
	2.1 Introduction	5
	2.2 Performance of Candidates	5
	2.3 Analysis of Candidate Performance	6
	2.4 Conclusions	16
	2.5 Recommendations to Teachers and Students	18
3.	Higher Level	20
	3.1 Introduction	20
	3.2 Performance of Candidates	20
	3.3 Analysis of Candidate Performance	21
	3.4 Conclusions	32
	3.5 Recommendations to Teachers and Students	33

1. General Introduction

1.1 The Syllabus

The revised syllabus for Geography at Leaving Certificate was implemented in schools in September 2004 and examined for the first time in 2006.

The syllabus structure has a clear differentiation between Higher and Ordinary Levels. The introduction to each of the syllabus units shows clear differentiation between the outcomes for Higher and Ordinary Level. The optional unit is studied at Higher Level only.

The syllabus structure comprises:

- Three mandatory core units
- One elective unit from a choice of two
- One optional unit at Higher Level from a choice of four.

The core units are as follows:

- Core Unit 1 – Patterns and Processes in the Physical Environment
- Core Unit 2 – Regional Geography
- Core Unit 3 – Geographical Investigation and Skills.

The two electives units are:

- Elective Unit 4 – Patterns and Processes in Economic Activities
- Elective Unit 5 – Patterns and Processes in the Human Environment.

The optional units at Higher Level are:

- Optional Unit 6 – Global Interdependence
- Optional Unit 7 – Geoecology
- Optional Unit 8 – Culture and Identity
- Optional Unit 9 – The Atmosphere-Ocean Environment.

1.2 The Examination

At Leaving Certificate Ordinary and Higher Level, Geography is assessed by means of a coursework component with a total allocation of 100 marks and a written final examination of two hours and fifty minutes duration with a total allocation of 400 marks.

- (i) The coursework component consists of a report on a geographical investigation on a topic chosen from a prescribed list, published annually by the State Examinations Commission (SEC). The list is common to Higher and Ordinary Level. This Geographical Investigation Report carries a weighting of 20%. In 2012, the completed reports were submitted by candidates on or before April 30th.
- (ii) The final written examination comprises two parts at both Ordinary and Higher Level. At both levels, Part One contains twelve short-answer questions and candidates are required to answer ten of these questions. Part Two

contains three structured multi-part questions on each of the Core Units 1 and 2 and candidates at both levels are required to answer one question from each of these core units. There are three structured multi-part questions on Elective Unit 4 and on Elective Unit 5 and candidates at both levels are required to answer one question from the elective unit that they have studied. Part Two, at Higher Level, also contains three essay style questions on each of the four optional units and candidates are required to answer one question from the optional unit that they have studied. The written examination carries a weighting of 80%.

This report should be read in conjunction with the examination papers and the marking schemes for 2012. These are available for downloading from the website of the State Examinations Commission at www.examinations.ie.

1.3 The Candidature

The number and percentage of candidates taking Leaving Certificate Geography from the full Leaving Certificate cohort for 2009 to 2012, is shown in Table 1 below. The numbers taking Leaving Certificate Geography decreased by approximately 6% between 2011 and 2012, however, it must be noted that the overall cohort taking the Leaving Certificate also declined in the same period by 3%.

Year	Leaving Certificate Candidature	Geography	% of total cohort
2009	54,197	25,061	46.2%
2010	54,480	26,175	48.0%
2011	54,344	27,306	50.2%
2012	52,592	25,734	48.9%

Table 1: Leaving Certificate Geography candidature 2009-2012

Table 2 below shows the number of candidates taking Geography at Higher and Ordinary Level for the Leaving Certificate from 2009 to 2012. The number of candidates taking the Higher Level has been relatively constant over the last number of years with a steady rise from 2006 after the introduction of the revised syllabus. The proportion of candidates taking the Ordinary Level has decreased slightly year on year. The number of candidates at Ordinary Level in 2012 decreased by 0.5% from 2011, while there has been a corresponding increase in the Higher Level cohort in the same period.

Year	Total	Ordinary Level		Higher Level	
		Candidature	%	Candidature	%
2009	25,061	6,037	24.1%	19,024	75.9%
2010	26,175	5,991	22.9%	20,184	77.1%
2011	27,306	6,058	22.2%	21,248	77.8%
2012	25,734	5,592	21.7%	20,142	78.3%

Table 2: Leaving Certificate Geography candidature (Ordinary and Higher Levels) 2009-2012

2. Ordinary Level

2.1 Introduction

At Leaving Certificate Ordinary Level, Geography is assessed by means of a coursework component and a written final examination of two hours and fifty minutes duration with a combined mark allocation of 500 marks. The structure of the assessment with mark allocation and weightings is outlined in Table 3 below.

Component	Assessment Requirement	Marks	Weighting
Coursework			
Geographical Investigation Report	One investigation from a prescribed list of six topics	100	20%
Written Examination			
Part One Short answer questions	Twelve questions to attempt ten	100	20%
Part Two Structured questions			
Core Unit 1 Physical Environment	Three multi-part questions to attempt one	100	20%
Core Unit 2 Regional Geography	Three multi-part questions to attempt one	100	20%
Elective Unit 4 and Unit 5 Economic and Human	Six multi-part questions to attempt one	100	20%

Table 3: Assessment structure of Leaving Certificate Geography (Ordinary Level)

2.2 Performance of Candidates

A total of 5,592 candidates sat the examination at Ordinary Level in 2012.

The final results were as follows:

Year	Total	A	B	C	ABC	D	E	F	N/G	EFNG
2009	6,037	3.7	22.7	48.1	74.5	21.5	3.3	0.5	0	3.8
2010	5,991	3.8	21.8	47.7	73.3	22.1	3.6	1.1	0.1	4.8
2011	6,058	4.2	26.8	44.2	75.2	20.0	3.5	1.1	0.1	4.7
2012	5,592	3.8	27.6	43.5	74.9	21.2	3.2	0.7	0.1	4.0

Table 4: Grade outcomes Leaving Certificate Geography (Ordinary Level) 2009-2012 (Grade figures are percentages)

Results in 2012 were generally in line with outcomes in previous years.

2.3 Analysis of Candidate Performance

The following commentary, which is based on the reports of examiners, should be read in conjunction with the relevant examination paper and marking scheme which are available on www.examinations.ie. The data relating to frequency of attempts and average mark achieved are based on an analysis of a sample of scripts.

2.3.1 The Geographical Investigation Report

Attempt Rate: 95% (from sample)

Average Mark: 88 out of 100 marks

The Geographical Investigation Report is a mandatory component and carries an assessment weighting of 20%. The majority of candidates achieved a high mark and reports were generally well-presented and in line with the required format and length. Examiners noted that some 5% of Ordinary Level candidates did not submit a Geographical Investigation Report and this had a negative effect on overall grade outcomes for those candidates.

Examiners reported an improvement on previous years in the standard of the Geographical Investigation Reports. The majority of candidates achieved marks well in excess of the marks achieved in the written examination paper. Twenty three percent of candidates gained full marks. This indicates the importance of the coursework assessment, particularly for candidates who may not perform well in a terminal written examination. The majority of candidates displayed good knowledge of their chosen topic and adopted a structured approach to the format of the report. Examiners reported that a minority of candidates displayed a lack of planning in the completion of their reports. Typically, these candidates did not focus their argument precisely and presented information in the incorrect sections in the report reporting booklet.

Table 5 below shows the frequency of attempts of each of the geographical investigation topics on the prescribed list for the 2012 examination based on the sample at Ordinary Level.

List of Geographical Investigation Topics 2012	Frequency of attempts
A study of one landform evident on the Irish landscape formed by geomorphic processes.	92%
Study the relationship between economic activity and traffic flow in a local area.	2%
Analyse the change in land-use patterns from the Central Business District (CBD) outwards in a local area over time.	3%
Water pollution – A study of a local stream or river.	1%
Demographic change in a local setting.	1%
A survey of the distribution of economic activities past and present in a local area.	1%

Table 5: Leaving Certificate Geography (Ordinary Level) 2012 - Frequency of attempts of geographical investigation topics based on the sample

The most popular topic was *A study of one landform evident on the Irish landscape formed by geomorphic processes* with 92% of candidates from the sample attempting it. Most students concentrated on meanders and V-shaped valleys in the river context or sea cliff and beach in the coastal context. An occasional study of glacial and karst landforms were also in evidence. Examiners noted that a significant number of candidates tended to overdevelop aspects of the investigation and included superfluous material in various sections of the report. An example of this cited by examiners was the inclusion of comprehensive descriptions of the investigation site in the introduction and planning sections of the report.

In a small number of instances, examiners reported concerns about apparently excessive similarities between reports within certain centres. While it is recognised that such similarity may come about inadvertently in a group work situation, the integrity of the examination must be upheld. The Geographical Investigation Report must be the work of the individual candidate submitting it and responsibility for ensuring this lies with the candidate and is attested by the teacher/school on the Form P2.

In relation to the Geographical Investigation Reports, examiners noted the following:

Stage 1: Introduction

Generally, candidates gained high marks here and the purpose of the investigation was clearly outlined. Examiners reported that some candidates included detailed descriptions of the investigation site which was not required.

Stage 2: Planning

The majority of candidates clearly outlined their planning and achieved high marks. Some reports lacked detail and included information relevant to Stage 3 of the report. A minority of candidates included reference to work by their teachers. Examiners noted that while many candidates presented excellent illustrations of the equipment used in the investigation, the marks available for such illustrations were limited.

Stage 3: Gathering of Information

Examiners reported an improvement on previous years in candidates' performance in this section. As outlined in Circular S85/09 "*A method of gathering may be a single activity, such as, for example, measuring. A method of gathering may also be a task. A task is a group of relevant linked activities. For example, in a land use survey, a task could involve a number of the following activities – sketching, counting, measuring, colour coding etc. Any number of these, or similar activities, could be combined to form one gathering task.*" Candidates who adopted a systematic approach to their geographical investigation and outlined two tasks/methods which linked to the aims of the investigation and who provided detailed descriptions of the activity of the gathering of the information were awarded high marks. Some candidates did not elaborate sufficiently on the carrying out of the activity and did not outline explicitly how the information was gathered.

Stage 4: Results, Conclusions and Evaluations

As in previous years, examiners reported that surpluses of results were presented by the majority of candidates. While an improvement in the drawing of appropriate conclusions was reported, a number of candidates continue to merely restate their

results. Examiners reported that evaluations continue to be a weak area in this section and a number of candidates omitted evaluations altogether.

Stage 5: Presentation of Results

The majority of candidates performed well in this section although a number of candidates failed to provide a second different method of presentation as required. In some instances, where line graphs or bar graphs were drawn axes were not labelled.

2.3.2 Written Examination

Part One – Short Answer Questions

Attempt Rate: 100% (from sample)

Average Mark: 77 out of 100 marks

All candidates attempted the short answer questions section. Even though the majority of candidates attempted all questions only 2% gained full marks.

In relation to the short answer questions examiners noted the following:

Question 2 - Economic Activity

A significant number of candidates were unable to categorise economic activities into primary, secondary and tertiary activities.

Question 4 - Ordnance Survey Map

This question was not attempted by many candidates and in a number of cases when it was attempted candidates were unable to measure the length of a section of the river.

Question 6 - Aerial Photograph and Ordnance Survey Map

This question was generally well answered by the majority of candidates. Some candidates had difficulty correctly naming a location on the aerial photograph. Examiners also reported that some candidates had difficulty working with both the Ordnance Survey map and aerial photograph within the one question.

Question 7 - Physical Landforms

This was generally well answered however it was noted that a number of candidates did not know physical landforms outside the geomorphic processes that they studied in detail as required by the syllabus (cf. syllabus §1.5).

Question 9 - Irish Census

This was well answered in the main. In some instances parts (iii) and (iv) caused difficulties but this appeared to be a consequence of the candidate misreading the question.

Question 10 - Weather Charts

This was generally well answered but some candidates were unable to correctly name Ireland's climate.

Part Two – Structured Questions

Table 6 below shows the frequency of attempts and average mark achieved per question in the core units of Physical Environment and Regional Geography and the Economic and Human elective units. The data in this table relating to frequency of attempts and average mark achieved per question are based on an analysis of a sample of scripts. Examiners reported that a significant number of candidates attempted more than the required number of questions and in some instances attempted questions from both the elective units.

Part Two Question No.	Attempts (%)	Average mark (out of 100)
Section 1 Core		
Physical Environment		
Question 1	37%	51
Question 2	23%	35
Question 3	59%	48
Regional Geography		
Question 4	13%	36
Question 5	73%	42
Question 6	18%	49
Section 2 Electives		
Economic Elective		
Question 7	15%	51
Question 8	27%	48
Question 9	11%	32
Human Elective		
Question 10	31%	59
Question 11	8%	36
Question 12	25%	32

Table 6: Leaving Certificate Geography (Ordinary Level) 2012 - Frequency of attempts and average mark by question based on the sample – Part Two structured questions

An analysis of candidates' responses to individual questions, as reported by examiners, is outlined below.

Section 1 Core Unit 1 Patterns and Processes in the Physical Environment

Question 1

Attempt Rate: 37% (from sample)

Average mark: 51 out of 100 marks

- A. Examiners noted that the quality of sketch maps presented by the majority of candidates was excellent in terms of proportion and presentation. Candidates located items with care and many used a key/legend to identify their symbols. The identification of an area of land over 120 metres was omitted by some candidates. A minority of candidates confused the Jamestown Canal with a section of the River Shannon. Examiners reported that there was no evidence to suggest that the printing error on the legend of the Ordnance Survey map affected candidates' performance in the examination. This was confirmed by

reports that all candidates in the sample correctly presented an area of mixed woodland on their sketch maps.

- B. In general the standard of answer in part (i) relating to sedimentary rocks was of a higher standard than the standard of answer in part (ii) relating to metamorphic rocks. Part (iii) produced some excellent answers on the formation of sedimentary rock; however, those who chose to deal with the formation of metamorphic rocks often confused metamorphic rock formation with igneous rock formation.
- C. Examiners reported that the structure of the question assisted candidate engagement with the question. This was generally well answered. Most candidates were able to name a tectonic plate but fewer were able to name the Pacific Ring of Fire.

Question 2

Attempt Rate: 23% (from sample)

Average mark: 35 out of 100 marks

- A. Candidates' responses to the illustration of the internal structure of the Earth, in part (i) were generally good; however, some confused the 'mantle' and 'inner core'. Part (ii) was well answered by all.
- B. A number of candidates misread this question and only provided information on one landform while the question required candidates to deal with two different landforms. Explanations regarding the formation of landforms were generally of a good standard and candidates illustrated their answers well. Mass movement was rarely chosen by candidates.
- C. Examiners noted that candidates were challenged by this question and only a minority were awarded high marks.

Question 3

Attempt Rate: 59% (from sample)

Average mark: 48 out of 100 marks

- A. The majority of candidates were awarded full marks in this part of the question. Examiners reported that candidates displayed high levels of understanding of how tsunamis occur.
- B. Examiners noted that a number of candidates did not attempt this part of the question. Those who did attempt it tended to choose the human control of rivers or sea processes. Mass movement was rarely dealt with. Some candidates provided very good answers on case studies they had completed on the Colorado and Yangtze Rivers.
- C. The diagram elicited a good response from candidates with the exception of those who confused a 'swallow hole' with a 'blow hole' in part (i). Most candidates named a further feature for part (ii). Examiners reported that

part (iii) was more demanding but some very good quality answers were in evidence. The standard of diagrams presented by the majority of candidates was excellent with many candidates presenting their own diagrams rather than just reproducing the diagram on the examination paper.

Section 1 Core Unit 2 Regional Geography

Question 4

Attempt Rate: 13% (from sample)

Average mark: 36 out of 100 marks

- A. Some examiners reported that the standard of map presentation was poor and many candidates had difficulty sketching an outline map of a European region. Cities were frequently confused and candidates regularly failed to correctly locate a river or mountain range in their chosen region. Some candidates displayed good knowledge of the locational geography of their European regions. The South of Italy and the Paris Basin were the most popular regions.
- B. While a number of candidates answered this question well, some candidates referred to industry instead of agriculture, as the question required. Examiners noted that some candidates ignored the headings given in the question while others appeared to be constrained by them. India was the most popular choice with fewer candidates dealing with Brazil and South West USA.
- C. This question was generally well answered with the majority of candidates choosing to describe the importance of tourism and transport.

Question 5

Attempt Rate: 73% (from sample)

Average mark: 42 out of 100 marks

- A. This question was well answered and the majority of candidates were awarded maximum marks.
- B. Examiners reported that in part (i) of this question a substantial number of candidates were unable to name any country that joined the European Union since 2004. Part (ii) yielded better quality answers with positive benefits such as trade, travel and employment being furnished. Some candidates either misread the question or chose to ignore the term 'expansion' and this had a negative impact on the marks awarded.
- C. This question was generally well answered and a substantial number of candidates based their answers on a case study of the growth of Dublin. Examiners noted that the concept of an 'urban region' proved difficult for a minority of candidates.

Question 6

Attempt Rate: 18% (from sample)

Average mark: 49 out of 100 marks

- A. The standard of outline sketch maps of Ireland was generally poor and examiners reported a lack of knowledge of the geography of Ireland by a number of candidates. The Greater Dublin Area was the most common region chosen. The Border, Midlands and West (BMW) region, when chosen, was often confused with the Western region.
- B. Examiners noted that some candidates answered this question well. The Greater Dublin Area was selected most frequently and the influence of transport was discussed by the majority of candidates. Examiners reported that a number of candidates lost focus in this question and did not relate their answer back to manufacturing industry as required.
- C. Regions in developing countries were widely chosen here with particular reference to the Sahel and Calcutta. This provided an opportunity for those who had studied the human elective to integrate material studied for this elective. Examiners noted that some candidates appeared to make good use of elements of questions from other areas on the examination paper such as urban sprawl in the Greater Dublin Area, traffic congestion and overcrowding to assist them in answering this question.

Section 2 – Elective Unit 4 Patterns and Processes in Economic Activities

Examiners reported that Elective Unit 4 increased in popularity again this year with approximately 39% of candidates opting for questions on this elective.

Question 7

Attempt Rate: 15% (from sample)

Average mark: 51 out of 100 marks

- A. The standard of sketch maps of the aerial photograph presented by the majority of candidates was high. Some candidates experienced difficulty locating the ‘marina’ and tended to have it out of proportion and dominating the sketch map.
- B. Examiners noted that the structuring of the question and the consequent distribution of marks contributed to a resultant good average mark for this question. The majority of candidates displayed a clear understanding of multinational companies and how they operate. Part (iii) of this question was the exception, with some candidates presenting a poorer standard of answer. The word ‘market’ was misinterpreted by a number of candidates and many named shops/stores as the market where products were sold. The most common responses in part (iv) were grants, buildings and an educated workforce.
- C. This part of the question was not attempted by a large number of candidates. Part (i) proved difficult with some candidates unable to name a developing economy that they had studied. The concept of colonialism and its impact on a

developing economy proved difficult for many candidates. Examiners reported that candidates who completed a case study on colonialism presented very detailed and well informed accounts of this case study.

Question 8

Attempt Rate: 27% (from sample)

Average mark: 48 out of 100 marks

- A. In general, graphs were of a high standard with many candidates achieving full marks. Bar charts and trend graphs were mostly in evidence. Some candidates lost marks for incorrect labelling of the graphs and for incorrectly calibrating the vertical axis.
- B. The requirement to use a six-figure grid reference including a correct subzone letter to provide a location for a recycling plant proved difficult for a number of candidates. In part (ii) some candidates failed to elaborate sufficiently on the suitability of their chosen location for the recycling plant.
- C. Examiners noted that candidates often confused climate change and ozone depletion in part (i). Answers to part (ii) tended to be vague and generalised. The effect of climate change was better answered by some candidates with references to ice melting, animal extinctions and flooding. A number of candidates did not attempt this part of the question.

Question 9

Attempt Rate: 11% (from sample)

Average mark: 32 out of 100 marks

- A. This was very well answered by the majority of candidates and many achieved full marks.
- B. The majority of candidates selected the Common Agricultural Policy and answers tended to be of a high standard. Examiners noted that many candidates presented a detailed description of their chosen policy but did not explain how the Irish economy benefits from this policy. A minority of candidates selected Social Funding. In these instances the standard of answering was poor with candidates describing the domestic social welfare system instead of explaining how Social Funding from the European Union benefits the Irish economy.
- C. The standard of answer presented by some candidates was poor as they failed to address the question correctly. Some candidates correctly referred to Corrib gas field as an example but had insufficient detail to be awarded high marks.

Section 2 – Elective Unit 5 Patterns and Processes in Economic Activities

Elective Unit 5 remains the more popular of the two electives with approximately 61% of candidates attempting questions on this elective.

Question 10

Attempt Rate: 31% (from sample)

Average mark: 59 out of 100 marks

- A. Examiners reported that the standard of graph drawing was generally very high. The labelling of the horizontal and vertical axes proved difficult for some candidates. The recession was universally offered as a reason to explain the increase in emigration.
- B. Candidates displayed very good map reading and aerial photograph interpretation skills. The majority of candidates tended to refer to the river, transport or tourism as reasons for the development of the town at its present location. Some candidates failed to elaborate sufficiently.
- C. The term ‘overpopulation’ was well defined by many candidates. Part (ii) was well answered and many candidates provided surplus information. Calcutta was the most frequently cited example.

Question 11

Attempt Rate: 8% (from sample)

Average mark: 36 out of 100 marks

- A. The sketch maps of the aerial photograph were generally well constructed and many candidates gained full marks. Some candidates did not include the ‘footprint’ of the church while others incorrectly located the recreational (leisure) area.
- B. This was well answered with the majority of candidates being able to identify correct locations where traffic congestion might occur. A good discussion of the reasons as to why congestion might occur was given by most candidates. Some candidates had difficulty suggesting solutions to the problem of traffic congestion. The most frequent correct solutions suggested by candidates included roundabouts, traffic lights, development of public transport and bypasses.
- C. The majority of candidates correctly named a developing or developed city that they had studied. In parts (ii) and (iii) however, some candidates tended to lack focus and others failed to structure their answers correctly in order to answer the question asked.

Question 12

Attempt Rate: 25% (from sample)

Average mark: 32 out of 100 marks

- A. The majority of candidates achieved full marks here; however, some candidates were challenged by parts (iv) and (v).
- B. Examiners reported that a number of candidates did not appear to understand the term 'urban sprawl'. Candidates generally failed to differentiate between causes of urban sprawl in part (i) and problems associated with it in part (ii).
- C. Many candidates did not attempt this part of the question. Examiners reported that those who did attempt it displayed a good understanding of the difficulties associated with an aging population. Candidates who provided the greatest elaboration of their argument were awarded the highest marks.

2.4 Conclusions

- the standard of fieldwork undertaken in schools and the standard of the majority of the Geographical Investigation Reports was generally very high
- The State Examinations Commission acknowledges the assistance of geography teachers and school authorities in the preparation of candidates and for the facilitation of candidates during the completion of the geographical investigation
- The coursework component is very beneficial to candidates and often particularly beneficial to those who do not perform well in the written examination
- Five percent of candidates did not submit a Geographical Investigation Report This had a negative impact on the overall grade achieved by those candidates
- Candidates who outlined their two tasks/methods clearly and discussed the carrying out of the investigation in detail were awarded high marks
- Many candidates displayed a very good knowledge of the course content and were well prepared for the examination
- The use of visual stimuli throughout the examination paper facilitated candidates engagement with the examination
- Some candidates failed to provide sufficient development of points of argument
- Candidates displayed a high standard of skills in their drawing of sketch maps from the Ordnance Survey maps and aerial photograph, analysing tables, construction of graphs, interpretation of satellite images and interpretation of geographical accounts
- Some candidates found measuring on the Ordnance Survey map difficult. Location by grid reference and location on the aerial photograph continues to challenge some candidates
- Examiners reported that there was no evidence to suggest that the printing error on the legend of the Ordnance Survey map affected candidates' performance in the examination
- The quality of sketch maps in Regional Geography, Core Unit 2 was unsatisfactory in many cases
- Poor and incorrect labelling of axes on the graph work was noted both in the Geographical Investigation Report and in the written examination paper and identified as an area of weakness

- A number of candidates attempted more than the required number of questions
- Some candidates may not have utilised the full time allocation available to complete the examination.

2.5 Recommendations to Teachers and Students

It is recommended that teachers:

- encourage students to present their Geographical Investigation Report using the structure and headings provided in the reporting booklet supplied by the State Examinations Commission
- use a systematic approach to the geographical investigation and focus on two clear tasks/methods for gathering the information for the geographical investigation
- ensure that students are made aware of the importance of placing their presentation of results appropriately in the Geographical Investigation Report
- encourage all students to complete and submit the Geographical Investigation Report and emphasise its importance to the overall grade achieved
- ensure that students are aware that the geographical investigation must be clearly and unambiguously the work of the individual student
- continue to teach key geographical terms explicitly
- encourage students to develop their responses beyond simple statements through explanations, descriptions and the use of examples
- ensure students are familiar with the layout of the examination paper and aware of the key instructional terms used in the examination
- ensure students are familiar with the requirements of the written examination and provide students with opportunities to practise for the examination using past examination papers and the published marking scheme as a resource and a guide. These are available on the SEC website www.examinations.ie
- encourage students to read the examination paper at the start of the examination, before attempting any question
- encourage students to use the full allocation of time to sit the examination
- continue to provide opportunities to practise the skill of drawing sketch maps of Ireland, European and Continental/Sub-Continental regions
- ensure that students are familiar with a variety of graphical aids including charts, graphs, photographs and satellite imagery
- provide opportunities to develop skills in map and photograph interpretation such as drawing sketch maps from Ordnance Survey maps and aerial photographs

It is recommended that students:

- present their Geographical Investigation Report using the structure and headings provided
- complete and submit the Geographical Investigation Report
- concentrate on two clear distinct tasks/methods for gathering the information and provide detailed discussion on the carrying out of each task/method when completing the Geographical Investigation Report
- ensure that all work on the geographical investigation is their own individual work
- develop their responses to questions, where appropriate, with explanations, descriptions and examples
- become familiar with all the key terms in geography and all the instructional words that appear on the examination paper
- practice drawing simple annotated diagrams to illustrate various features
- practice the skill of constructing graphs with care to label both axes
- practice and familiarise themselves with drawing and completing sketch maps for Regional Geography, Core Unit 2, questions
- practice working with all the graphical stimulus material that appears on the examination paper
- familiarise themselves with the overall structure and layout of the examination paper. To this end, ensure that they are familiar with past examination papers and marking schemes which are available on the SEC website www.examinations.ie
- read all examination questions carefully at the beginning of the examination to ensure that they are responding precisely to what is asked of them
- use the full allocation of time to sit the examination.

3. Higher Level

3.1 Introduction

At Leaving Certificate Higher Level, Geography is assessed by means of a coursework component and a written final examination of two hours and fifty minutes duration with a combined allocation of 500 marks. The structure of the assessment with mark allocation and weightings is outlined in Table 7 below.

Component	Assessment Requirement	Marks	Weighting
Coursework			
Geographical Investigation Report	One investigation from a prescribed list of six topics	100	20%
Written Examination			
Part One Short answer questions	Twelve questions to attempt ten	80	16%
Part Two Structured questions			
Core Unit 1 Physical Environment	Three multi-part questions to attempt one	80	16%
Core Unit 2 Regional Geography	Three multi-part questions to attempt one	80	16%
Elective Unit 4 and Unit 5 Economic and Human	Six multi-part questions to attempt one	80	16%
Option Units 6, 7, 8 & 9	Twelve essay style questions to attempt one	80	16%

Table 7: Assessment structure Leaving Certificate Geography (Higher Level)

3.2 Performance of Candidates

A total of 20,142 candidates sat the examination at this level in 2012. The final results were as follows:

Year	Total	A	B	C	ABC	D	E	F	N/G	EFNG
2009	19,024	9.0	29.6	36.6	75.2	22.2	2.3	0.2	0	2.5
2010	20,184	9.0	30.9	37.5	77.4	20.8	1.6	0.2	0	1.8
2011	21,248	9.1	30.1	37.2	76.4	21.3	2.0	0.2	0	2.2
2012	20,142	8.4	28.4	37.3	74.1	23.0	2.8	0.2	0	3.0

Table 8: Grade outcomes Leaving Certificate Geography (Higher Level) 2009-2012 (Grade figures are percentages)

The grade profile of final results was broadly in line with those of recent years. The A grade and ABC grade were slightly down on previous years.

3.3 Analysis of Candidate Performance

The following commentary, which is based on the reports of examiners, should be read in conjunction with the relevant examination paper and marking scheme which are available on www.examinations.ie. The data relating to frequency of attempts and average mark achieved is based on an analysis of a sample of scripts.

3.3.1 The Geographical Investigation Report

Attempt Rate: 100% (from sample)

Average Mark: 84 marks out of 100

The Geographical Investigation Report is a mandatory component and carries an assessment weighting of 20%. Examiners reported that the standard of the Geographical Investigation Reports improved again this year with a large proportion of candidates achieving a high mark. All candidates presented a Geographical Investigation Report in the sample. Candidates, in the main, used a structured approach in presenting their report and followed the format of the reporting booklet. However some candidates did not focus their discussion as required by the specific headings. As marks are awarded to the investigation on a section by section basis, and only to material which is relevant to that section of the investigation, a minority of candidates lost marks due to a failure to associate specific aspects of the investigation process with corresponding sections of the reporting booklet. Examiners noted the importance of the coursework component in the overall outcome for all candidates but particularly for candidates who did not perform well in the written examination.

Table 9 below shows the frequency of attempts of each of the geographical investigation topics on the prescribed list for the 2012 examination based on the sample.

List of Geographical Investigation Topics 2012	Frequency of attempts
A study of one landform evident on the Irish landscape formed by geomorphic processes.	92%
Study the relationship between economic activity and traffic flow in a local area.	2%
Analyse the change in land-use patterns from the Central Business District (CBD) outwards in a local area over time.	3%
Water pollution – A study of a local stream or river.	1%
Demographic change in a local setting.	1%
A survey of the distribution of economic activities past and present in a local area.	1%

Table 9: Leaving Certificate Geography (Higher Level) 2012 - Frequency of attempts of geographical investigation topics based on the sample

As at Ordinary Level, the most popular topic from the prescribed list for 2012 was *A study of one landform evident on the Irish landscape formed by geomorphic processes*, with 92% of candidate from the sample attempting it. Most students concentrated on meanders and V-shaped valleys in the river context or sea cliff and beach in the coastal context. An occasional study of glacial and karst landforms was

also in evidence. Examiners noted that a significant number of candidates tended to overdevelop aspects of the investigation and included superfluous material in the various sections of the report.

In a small number of instances, examiners reported incidents of excessive similarity in reports within certain centres. While it is recognised that such similarity may come about inadvertently in a group work situation, the integrity of the examination must be upheld. The Geographical Investigation Report must be the work of the individual candidate submitting it and responsibility for ensuring this lies with the candidate and is attested by the teacher/school on the Form P2.

In relation to the Geographical Investigation Reports, examiners noted the following:

Stage 1 - Introduction

Generally, candidates clearly outlined the purpose of the geographical investigation. In a minority of cases in relation to the investigation topic of a study of one landform, candidates did not refer to the specific landform and instead presented a generic set of aims which could have applied to any number of geographical investigations.

Stage 2 - Planning

The majority of candidates outlined their planning in a clear and concise manner. Examiners reported that marks were lost where candidates tended to be vague and failed to provide specific detail regarding the actual websites, textbooks, maps etc. used. Examiners noted that while many candidates presented excellent illustrations of the equipment to be used for the geographical investigation, the marks available for such illustrations was limited.

Stage 3 - Gathering of Information

This section requires candidates to report on the two tasks/methods used to gather the information for the geographical investigation. As outlined in Circular S85/09 “*A method of gathering may be a single activity, such as, for example, measuring. A method of gathering may also be a task. A task is a group of relevant linked activities. For example, in a land use survey, a task could involve a number of the following activities – sketching, counting, measuring, colour coding etc. Any number of these, or similar activities, could be combined to form one gathering task.*” Candidates were awarded high marks when they clearly identified the two tasks/methods which linked to the aims of the geographical investigation and when they elaborated in detail on how these tasks/methods were executed. There was insufficient elaboration by some candidates on the explicit details of the gathering of information while there was an overemphasis on why activities were undertaken by other candidates. Some candidates presented very detailed accounts on why the geographical investigation was undertaken which had no relevance to this section of the report.

Stage 4 - Results, Conclusions and Evaluations

Examiners reported that candidates had no difficulty providing results of their geographical investigation and in fact in most cases there was a surplus of results. Almost all candidates were awarded full marks for results. Conclusions were presented in a coherent and clear manner by the majority of candidates; however some candidates simply restated the results without drawing any conclusions. Other candidates provided vague poorly developed statements. While examiners reported

an improvement in the provision of evaluations they also reported that evaluations were often repetitive, particularly with regard to problems encountered during the investigation and also regarding what they would do differently if doing the geographical investigation again.

Stage 5 - Presentation of Results

The standard of presentation of results by the majority of candidates was very good and full marks were awarded in many cases. Examiners noted however that some candidates failed to present a second different method of presentation. In some instances axes were poorly labelled or labelling was omitted and information was not plotted accurately. In a minority of cases the results were presented in the incorrect section in the reporting booklet.

3.3.2 Written Examination

Part One – Short Answer Questions

Attempt Rate: 100% (from sample)

Average Mark: 66 out of 80 marks

All candidates from the sample attempted the short answer questions and a significant proportion of candidates attempted all twelve questions.

In relation to the short answer questions examiners noted the following:

Question 1 - Glacial Landforms

This was generally well answered by the majority of candidates; however, some candidates were unable to distinguish between the arête, pyramidal peak and lateral moraine.

Question 2 - Physical Features

Candidates displayed good map interpretation skills in relation to physical geography and the question was well answered by almost all candidates.

Question 3 - Weather Chart

Some candidates displayed a thorough understanding of weather chart interpretation and achieved full marks while a minority performed poorly in this question.

Question 5 - Plate Tectonics

This question was generally well answered by the majority of candidates. Some candidates experienced difficulty identifying the asthenosphere.

Question 6 - Regions

Part (i) was very well answered by the majority of candidates; however the brief definitions required in part (ii) were not as well answered by a significant proportion of candidates.

Question 9 - Aerial Photograph and Ordnance Survey Map

The majority of candidates answered parts (i), (iii) and (iv) very well; however examiners reported that part (ii) was incorrectly answered by a significant proportion of candidates.

Question 11 - Population - Ireland

Almost all candidates answered this question well and examiners reported that a wide range of reasons were presented for why the Midlands region had the largest percentage increase in population in the period in question.

3.3.2 Part Two – Structured Questions

Table 10 below shows the frequency of attempts and average mark achieved per question in the Core Units of physical and regional geography and the economic and human elective units. The data in this table relating to frequency of attempts and average mark achieved per question are based on an analysis of a sample of scripts. Examiners reported that a significant number of candidates attempted more than the required number of questions and in some instances attempted questions from both the elective units.

Part Two Question No.	Attempts (%)	Average mark (out of 80)
Section 1 - Core		
Physical Environment		
Question 1	31%	40
Question 2	47%	43
Question 3	21%	36
Regional Geography		
Question 4	25%	37
Question 5	35%	36
Question 6	40%	42
Section 2 - Electives		
Economic Elective		
Question 7	12%	37
Question 8	11%	42
Question 9	14%	40
Human Elective		
Question 10	25%	38
Question 11	21%	37
Question 12	16%	44

Table 10: Leaving Certificate Geography (Higher Level) 2012 - Frequency of attempts and average mark by question based on the sample – Part Two structured questions

Section 1 Core Unit 1 Patterns and Processes in the Physical Environment

Question 1

Attempt Rate: 31% (from sample)

Average mark: 40 out of 80 marks

- A. The majority of candidates presented sketch maps of a high standard. Some candidates had difficulty locating the confluence and the drumlin. In a minority of cases candidates drew a sketch of the Ordnance Survey map instead of the aerial photograph as the question required.
- B. This question was generally well answered by most candidates. Limestone was the most common rock examined. Some candidates described the formation of limestone features or described the process of weathering of limestone instead of focusing on the formation of limestone rock. The requirement to describe the transformation to metamorphic rock in the question was not well answered by the majority of candidates. Examiners reported that a minority of candidates examined the formation of igneous rocks in error.
- C. Some candidates provided answers of a very high standard with reference to a number of locations and reasons. However, other candidates over emphasised the description of the theory of plate tectonics, and failed to link the theory to the distribution of earthquakes or dealt solely with the effects of earthquakes.

Question 2

Attempt Rate: 47% (from sample)

Average mark: 43 out of 80 marks

- A. Very few candidates achieved full marks with many failing to correctly name the plates, calculate the average annual movement or explain the term epicentre. Only a minority of candidates were able to name a second scale used to measure the magnitude/intensity of an earthquake.
- B. The majority of candidates chose part (i) explaining the formation of a landform of deposition rather than part (ii) which related to the process of mass movement. The explanation of the landform resulting from the process of deposition was generally well answered and illustrated. Levées, spits and beaches were the most common landforms chosen. Examiners reported that a significant number of candidates presented very detailed explanations on the formation of waterfalls which are landforms of erosion and were therefore awarded no marks. A minority of examiners noted that while some candidates completed their geographical investigation on a study of a landform resulting from the process of deposition, they did not refer to this particular landform when answering this question.
- C. Examiners reported that some candidates presented a lot of descriptive material on human activities but failed to examine the impact of human activities on natural processes. The most common examples referred to by candidates included the Three Gorges Dam, the River Rhine and Bull Island. Mass movement was rarely attempted by candidates.

Question 3

Attempt Rate: 21% (from sample)

Average mark: 36 out of 80 marks

- A. This was generally well answered by the majority of candidates with the exception of part (v). A large number of candidates were unable to explain the difference between the process of weathering and the process of erosion.
- B. The majority of candidates answered this question well. Examiners noted that some candidates appeared to have not read the question carefully and presented information on underground limestone features while others examined the formation of limestone, neither of which was required by the question.
- C. A significant number of candidates were challenged by this question. Answers lacked focus and depth. Some successful candidates explained in detail how folding impacted on the Irish landscape referring to the Ridge and Valley in Munster.

Section 1 Core Unit 2 Regional Geography

Question 4

Attempt Rate: 25% (from sample)

Average mark: 37 out of 80 marks

- A. The majority of candidates presented sketch maps of a high standard. Examiners reported that while the majority of candidates named the required features, some were unable to correctly locate them on their sketch map. Locating a major road or rail link proved challenging for many candidates. The most common examples of regions selected included South West USA, India and Brazil.
- B. This was generally very well answered by the majority of candidates with the Mezzogiorno and the Paris Basin the most popular examples discussed.
- C. Examiners reported that candidate's responses to this question were less satisfactory and that the majority of candidates provided an overview of population in the region rather than focusing specifically on distribution of population throughout the region.

Question 5

Attempt Rate: 35% (from sample)

Average mark: 36 out of 80 marks

- A. This was very well answered by almost all candidates. Marks were lost when candidates omitted the unit for the Euro in part (iii).

- B. A significant number of candidates presented answers dealing with economic and socio-economic factors that define regions rather than how the physical landscape can be used to define regions as the question required. Successful candidates discussed physical regions such as the Paris Basin and karst regions.
- C. Some candidates provided a general examination of the factors listed in the question and failed to refer to how the factors listed influenced the development of a specific urban area.

Question 6

Attempt Rate: 40% (from sample)

Average mark: 42 out of 80 marks

- A. The majority of candidates displayed a very good knowledge and understanding of the Euro-Zone crisis. A significant number were unable to name two European Union member states not in the Euro-Zone.
- B. While this question was well answered by the majority of candidates, some simply described the tertiary economic activity without examining factors that influence its development. Tourism and transport were the most common activities discussed with many referring to the Border, Midlands and West region or the Greater Dublin Area. A minority of candidates discussed more than one tertiary activity even though the question clearly stated that only one activity was required.
- C. While some candidates provided good accounts of how language and religion impact on the development of a Continental / Sub-Continental region, discussion on the impact of population dynamics and rural development was weak in the majority of cases.

Section 2 – Elective Unit 4 Patterns and Processes in Economic Activities

Examiners reported that approximately 39% of candidates opted for questions on Elective Unit 4 which was a slight increase on previous years.

Question 7

Attempt Rate: 12% (from sample)

Average mark: 37 out of 80 marks

- A. Examiners noted that the topical nature of this question assisted some candidates. Parts (iv) and (v) proved challenging for many candidates with a significant number of candidates unable to name a second greenhouse gas.
- B. While this question was generally well attempted by the majority of candidates, answers rarely merited full marks. Examiners reported that while Ordnance Survey map evidence was plentiful candidates failed to elaborate in sufficient detail in their explanations. Influencing factors discussed by candidates included roads, proximity to the river and the bridging point of the river.

- C. The majority of candidates displayed a thorough understanding of European Union policy and the most common European Union policies discussed were the Common Agricultural Policy and the Common Fisheries Policy. Answers in a minority of cases dealt with the influence of European Union Policy on the development of Ireland in general rather than with regional development in Ireland as the question required.

Question 8

Attempt Rate: 11% (from sample)

Average mark: 42 out of 80 marks

- A. Almost all candidates displayed good competencies in the skills of drawing graphs with bar graphs the most common graph drawn. A minority of candidates incorrectly labelled the axes or omitted labelling on the graphs altogether.
- B. While this was well answered by most candidates some failed to identify and develop the positive impacts of colonisation and instead focused solely on negative impacts. Examiners noted that candidates who studied the optional unit Culture and Identity presented answers of a high standard. Brazil was the most common example.
- C. The majority of candidates opted to discuss tourism rather than footloose industries in this question. It was generally well answered with tourism in regions in Ireland, France and Spain being the main examples discussed.

Question 9

Attempt Rate: 14.5% (from sample)

Average mark: 40 out of 80 marks

- A. Examiners reported positively on the high quality of sketch maps presented by the majority of candidates. Some candidates failed to show and label a particular item while others presented sketches that were out of proportion. A minority of candidates presented sketches of the Ordnance Survey map instead of the aerial photograph.
- B. This was well answered by almost all candidates attempting it. Candidates displayed a good knowledge of the multinational company that they had studied and its corporate strategies. Some candidates provided a mere description of the multinational company with no reference to the influence of the corporate strategies of the multinational company on the opening and closing of branch plants. Examples of multinational companies discussed included Dell, Intel, Johnson and Johnson, Apple and Glen Dimplex.
- C. This was very well answered by the majority of candidates. Those that referred to the Corrib gas field displayed an in-depth understanding of the conflict. The Amazon rainforest was also discussed by some candidates.

Section 2 – Elective Unit 5 Patterns and Processes in the Human Environment

Elective Unit 5 remains the more popular of the two electives with approximately 61% of candidates attempting questions on this elective.

Question 10

Attempt Rate: 25% (from sample)

Average mark: 38 out of 80 marks

- A. While the standard of sketches was generally high, a number of candidates did not achieve the same standard of sketches when drawing the Ordnance Survey map and aerial photograph. Some candidates had difficulty with proportion in this sketch particularly with regard to the connecting roads/streets.
- B. While some candidates answered this question correctly a minority of candidates misinterpreted the question and examined urban sprawl in the developed world. Others focused their discussion on the causes of the problem with limited reference to overcoming the problem as the question required. Sao Paulo and Calcutta were the two most popular examples discussed.
- C. The standard of answering by the majority of candidates was relatively good but a small minority of candidates failed to refer to the graph in their answer. In other instances there was excessive reference to the graph with little or no elaboration on the explanation.

Question 11

Attempt Rate: 21% (from sample)

Average mark: 37 out of 80 marks

- A. This was generally very well answered by the majority and candidates displayed a very thorough understanding of the impact of the recession on the numbers of goods vehicles.
- B. In a significant number of cases functions were named and identified with correct Ordnance Survey map evidence, however, candidates provided very little in the way of examination. Tourism, route centre and service centre were the typical functions identified by the candidates.
- C. This was not well answered by a significant number of candidates. The impact of specific improvements in technology on population growth was unclear and in some instances not identified at all.

Question 12

Attempt Rate: 16% (from sample)

Average mark: 44 out of 80 marks

- A. The majority of candidates displayed very good competencies in the skills of graph drawing. Some candidates omitted labelling on the axes of the graphs.
- B. A discussion on linear, nucleated and dispersed settlement patterns was the most common approach adopted by the majority of candidates in answering this question. Examiners reported that a significant number of candidates either misread the question or did not understand the question asked.
- C. This was generally well answered with the majority of candidates referring to changing land-use in Irish urban areas including Dublin, Cork and Galway.

Section 3 Option Units 6, 7, 8 and 9

Candidates choose to study one of the four optional units. Three questions on each of these optional units are provided on the examination paper and candidates are required to answer one question. Candidates therefore answered one of twelve questions in this section. In light of this range of choice of question and also given that only a small proportion of candidates study certain optional units, it is not possible to provide the same statistical analysis as provided for earlier questions on the examination paper.

Option 7, Geoecology, remains the most popular option with over 80% of candidates attempting questions from this option. The second most popular is Option 6, Global Interdependence. Examiners reported that a minority of candidates did not attempt this section of the examination paper which had a negative impact on overall grade outcomes for those candidates.

The most common areas of weakness continue to be poor structure and coherence in answers. Candidates are directed by the rubric of the examination paper that it is better to discuss three or four aspects of the theme in some detail rather than give a superficial treatment of a large number of points. Examiners reported that a significant number of candidates continue to ignore this instruction and instead provide too little detail on far too many themes/arguments. Examiners also reported that some candidates misread questions and presented extensive descriptive material that related to the topic of the question but did not answer the specific question asked.

Option 6 Global Interdependence - Questions 13, 14 and 15

This was the second most commonly attempted option. Question 15 was the most frequently attempted question within this option. Examiners reported that the standard of answering within this option was good by the majority of candidates.

Option 7 Geocology Question 16, 17 and 18

Geocology was the most popular of the four optional units. Question 16 was the least popular question within this option. Examiners noted that candidates' answers lacked focus and in many cases did not deal with each of terms within their answer. The standard of answering relating to podzolisation was poor in many cases.

Question 17 was the second most popular question within this option and was generally well answered by most candidates. The majority of candidates discussed overgrazing, over cropping and deforestation with the Sahel being the most common example cited.

Question 18 was the most popular question within this option. While the question provided headings, examiners noted that some candidates ignored these headings. Examiners also reported that in many cases answers presented did not answer the question asked. A significant number of candidates presented comprehensive descriptions of each of the activities listed but failed to examine the impact of these activities on biomes.

Option 8 Culture and Identity Questions 19, 20 and 21

Culture and Identity was the least popular option. All three questions were equally low in popularity. The standard of answering for Question 19 varied from being quite high to weak. Some candidates displayed a very clear understanding of the topic of the question. Question 20 was generally well answered by most candidates and examiners reported that this question had the highest average mark in this option. The most common examples included Brazil and South West USA. Question 21 was generally well answered by the majority with candidates referring to either Ireland or India most frequently.

Option 9 The Atmosphere-Ocean Environment Questions 22, 23 and 24

This was the least popular of the four options. The standard of answering in Question 22 was good with many candidates discussing issues such as El Nino and global warming. A number of candidates presented well annotated diagrams to support their discussions. The majority of candidates discussed the impact of rainfall on agriculture in Question 23. However, some candidates omitted a discussion on the impact of rainfall on domestic water supplies or provided a vague discussion of the topic. The majority of candidates answering Question 24 examined the water cycle, ocean currents and circulation cells and answers were of a high standard.

3.4 Conclusions

- The standard of the majority of the Geographical Investigation Reports was very good.
- The State Examinations Commission acknowledges the assistance of geography teachers and school authorities in the preparation of candidates and for the facilitation of candidates during the completion of the geographical investigation
- The coursework component is very beneficial to candidates and often particularly beneficial to those who do not perform well in the written examination
- Candidates who outlined their two tasks/methods clearly and discussed the carrying out of the investigation in detail were awarded high marks
- Many candidates demonstrated an excellent knowledge of the Geography syllabus and very high levels of preparedness for the examination
- Short answer questions were answered well with many candidates displaying good geographical skills
- Some candidates demonstrated poor examination techniques, including not reading questions carefully, failure to answer the question asked, attempting more than the required number of questions, failing to answer all of the required parts within individual questions, or leaving sections unanswered
- some candidates tended to present rather vague and generalised answers while others failed to develop points of argument sufficiently
- The use of visual stimuli throughout the examination paper facilitated candidates engagement with the examination
- The absence of correct labelling of the axes on the graph work was noted by many examiners both in the Geographical Investigation Report and in the written examination paper
- there was evidence that some candidates did not use the full time allocation with the presentation of cryptic and under developed responses to questions

A number of candidates did not attempt the question on the optional units and this had a negative impact on the overall grade achieved by those candidates

- Sketch maps were generally of a high standard but examiners noted that the geographical skills of some candidates would benefit from further development through guidance and practice.

3.5 Recommendations for Teachers and Students

It is recommended that teachers:

- encourage students to present their Geographical Investigation Report using the structure and headings provided in the reporting booklet supplied by the State Examinations Commission
- remind students to focus on two clear tasks/methods for gathering the information when planning the geographical investigation
- advise students to evaluate all aspects of the geographical investigation process
- ensure that students are made aware of the importance of placing their presentation of results appropriately in the Geographical Investigation Report
- inform students that the geographical investigation must be clearly and unambiguously their own individual work completed in accordance with the SECs requirements
- ensure students are familiar with the requirements of the written examination and provide students with opportunities to practice for the examination using past examination papers and the published marking scheme as a resource and a guide. These are available on the SEC website www.examinations.ie
- continue to teach key geographical terms to ensure students are familiar with them
- provide opportunities for students to interpret and use information from various stimuli, for example, charts, diagrams, tables, maps of various scales etc.
- continue to provide opportunities for students to apply and practice a variety of geographical skills including map reading and photograph interpretation across syllabus content
- provide opportunities for students to develop their skills at applying and adapting their knowledge and understanding thus improving their ability to respond to different examination questions
- encourage students to develop their responses beyond simple statements through explanations, descriptions and the use of examples
- advise students to avail of the the full allocation of time to sit the examination
- encourage students to read the examination paper at the start of the examination, before attempting any question.

It is recommended that students:

- present their Geographical Investigation Report using the structure and headings provided
- concentrate on two clear distinct tasks/methods for gathering the information and provide detailed discussion on the carrying out of each tasks/methods when completing the Geographical Investigation Report
- ensure that all work on the geographical investigation is their own individual work
- ensure that all material in the Geographical Investigation Report is presented in the appropriate section
- practice the skill of constructing graphs with care to label both axes
- develop their responses to questions, drawing appropriately from their knowledge and understanding, with explanations, descriptions and suitable examples. In the context of the questions on the optional units, students should concentrate on three or four aspects of theme rather than giving a superficial treatment of a large number of points
- become familiar with all the key terms in geography and all the instructional words that appear on the examination paper
- practice drawing simple annotated diagrams to illustrate various features
- read all the examination questions at the beginning of the examination to ensure that they are responding to what is asked of them
- take cognisance of the time available for each questions so as to ensure all questions are given appropriate attention
- make full use of the allocated time for the examination.