**Independent Investigation Checklist**

The information below details what you need to do to produce a top level piece of work. Remember ‘accuracy’ and ‘relevance’ are crucial to reach the top level. Please ask if you need help understanding any aspect of the checklist. Use the checklist below to help audit your work. Tick each box once each part has been completed to the best of your ability.

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| **Introduction** | Completed |
| An overall aim. This is a statement setting out what the investigation is planning to achieve. It must be geographically sound, achievable and at a manageable scale (not too big/small). This aim is based upon wider reading that you have undertaken. |  |
| 2 or 3 key questions/hypotheses. These help you to investigate the aim in more detail by identifying more specific areas. |  |
| Definitions of key terms. These need to be relevant to your investigation and integrated within your work (not written as a list). Some of these are likely to be referenced. |  |
| Information already known about your topic by geographers. This includes relevant background information and geographical theory. Some of this information is likely to be referenced. |  |
| Justify why it is important to study this particular topic. This explanation/justification should come from your wider reading. “I have always been interested in…” is not an appropriate justification. |  |
| Geographical context. How does your investigation link to other areas of geography? Show an appreciation that your investigation is part of a bigger picture. |  |
| Location. Why have you chosen to study this aspect of Geography in this particular area(s)? Describe, explain and justify the location of study. Write a paragraph as well as using annotated map(s). Provide relevant background information about the location. |  |
| Logically written. The individual components of your introduction should flow from one to another. |  |
| A wide range of relevant literature sources, which must be clearly and appropriately referenced. Sources should include information from news publications, educational journals, textbooks, organisations, etc. |  |

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| **Method** | Completed |
| Data collection techniques must collect data that is relevant to your study. |  |
| Primary fieldwork techniques. Describe in detail how you collected the data for each method. Someone reading this description should be able to replicate your study. Explain and justify why you collected the data using that particular method. |  |
| Include blank copies of data collection sheets. These should be labelled/annotated. You could use these annotations to justify method. |  |
| Secondary fieldwork techniques. Include information about the main secondary sources you have used to obtain further data. |  |
| Sampling strategies you used to select the sites you surveyed at each location (e.g. in Margate). Describe, explain and justify why you used this sampling strategy. |  |
| Sampling strategies you used to undertake particular techniques at each site. Describe, explain and justify why you used this sampling strategy. |  |
| Consider frequency of data collection techniques. Describe, explain and justify the number of times you collected data. |  |
| Consider the timing of data collection techniques. Is time of day relevant? Explain. |  |
| Health and safety issues. What do you need to do to ensure that you are safe whilst undertaking fieldwork? This must be relevant to your study. |  |
| Ethical dimensions. What do you need to take into account about the people/environment you are working with to ensure you are not impacting them? This must be relevant to your study. |  |
| **Data presentation and analysis** | Completed |
| A range of appropriate techniques. It is important that you select the correct data presentation technique to represent the fieldwork/research data. |  |
| Maps/graphs should have an appropriate title, key, scale, etc. |  |
| Large data collection tables should be included in an appendix at the end of your work |  |
| Statistical tests. Only use a statistical test if it is relevant to your investigation. |  |
| GIS. Use GIS, e.g. ArcGIS, to produce maps, if relevant to your investigation. |  |
| A justification of the data presentation techniques used. You may prefer to include this in your final evaluation section. |  |
| Each graph/map should be referred to at least once in your analysis. |  |
| Description of overall patterns/trends and anomalies using data. |  |
| Explanations of overall trends and anomalies using geographical theory and other information, e.g. knowledge of the local area. Reference where appropriate. |  |
| Links between data sets. For example, make links between different graphs/maps rather than just analysing each one in isolation. |  |
| Use geographical terminology |  |
| Links between comparative studies. Consider the wider reading you have done. Are your findings similar/different to similar studies in other areas? Explain. |  |
| A wide range of relevant literature sources, which must be clearly and appropriately referenced. Sources should include information from news publications, educational journals, textbooks, organisations, etc. |  |

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| **Conclusion and evaluation** | Completed |
| Refer back to your hypotheses and summarise the main findings from you investigation, using primary and secondary data |  |
| Explain your findings using relevant geographical knowledge and theory. If your results do not fit your expectations, explain why. |  |
| Demonstrate a clear and accurate understanding of how geographical location affects the results you have obtained. Would you expect to get similar/different results in an alternative location? |  |
| Refer back to your original aim by drawing together all findings from your investigation to reach an overall conclusion. |  |
| Use relevant geographical terminology |  |
| Show an awareness of a broader geographical context. What factors, other than the ones you have studied, have an influence on your investigation? |  |
| Evaluation of data collection methods. What worked well? What didn’t go so well? How could it be improved? (This could be done in the method section) |  |
| Consider the reliability of the data collected. Could there have been any errors in data collection? Explain. |  |
| Is the data collected representative of the area as a whole? How reliable is this data? |  |
| How reliable are the conclusions you have reached? Remember, your conclusions are only as accurate as the data you have collected. |  |

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| **Putting it all together** | Completed |
| Project proposal form. Complete all relevant sections of this form |  |
| Front cover. This should contain the title of your investigation, your name and candidate number |  |
| Contents page. This should indicate the different sections of your investigation |  |
| Page numbers. Each page should have a page number |  |
| Images. Only include relevant photos/maps/graphs |  |
| Figure number. Each image (map/graph) should have a figure number |  |
| Bibliography |  |
| Appendix. You may include an appendix at the end if you have lots of raw data. |  |
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I have looked through your work to check for completeness and identified any components that are missing from your Independent Investigation. Please note that just because an element is present it does not necessarily mean that this is top level. The following is absent from your Independent Investigation: