

General Certificate of Education

Archaeology 5011

Unit 1 Archaeological Sources and Methods: Survey and Excavation

Mark Scheme

2006 examination – January series

Mark schemes are prepared by the Principal Examiner and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation meeting attended by all examiners and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation meeting ensures that the mark scheme covers the candidates' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for the standardisation meeting each examiner analyses a number of candidates' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed at the meeting and legislated for. If, after this meeting, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been discussed at the meeting they are required to refer these to the Principal Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of candidates' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

ACH1

Survey and Excavation

Quality of Written Communication

The assessment of the Quality of Written Communication (QWC) is judged through the assessment of the clarity and appropriateness of the archaeological material presented. There are no discrete marks for the assessment of QWC but where questions are "levels" marked, QWC will influence the mark awarded within a particular level.

As a rough guide, QWC performance is characterised by the following descriptors.

- Level 1** Language is basic, descriptions and explanations are over-simplified and lack clarity.
- Level 2** Generally accurate use of language; descriptions and explanations can be easily followed, but are not clearly expressed throughout.
- Level 3** Accurate and appropriate use of language; descriptions and explanations are expressed with clarity throughout.

Further guidance on the assessment of QWC will be given at the Standardising Meeting.

Question 1

Study **Figure 1** and use your own knowledge.

Explain why structure 373 at Plas Gogerddan showed as a crop or parch mark.
(6 marks)

- | | | |
|-----|--|------------|
| L1: | Thin generic explanation of crop or parch marks. | 1 |
| L2: | Both parts of L1 or one part with reference to source or fuller generic explanation(s). | 2-3 |
| L3: | Fuller explanation of crop or parch marks with implicit reference to source. | 4 |
| L4: | Fuller explanation of crop and parch marks with fuller reference to source. | 5-6 |

Expect: Link foundation trench/pits to positive marks (and why: moisture, nutrients, etc.).
Link stone trench pit to parch marks (and why: lack of moisture, drought, root restriction, etc.).

For 6 **must** use the term positive crop-mark.

Question 2

Why do archaeologists make use of information from previously excavated sites similar to the one they are currently digging?
(4 marks)

- | | | |
|-----|--|------------|
| L1: | One or two general points, without explanation or development. | 1 |
| L2: | One or two developed points. | 2-3 |
| L3: | Three or more developed points. | 4 |

Expect: Comparison to avoid unnecessary work; fine-tune technique based on previous experience; know what finds/features to expect; understand possible layout; possible conservation issues; target sampling, etc.

Question 3

Study **Figure 1** and **Figure 2**.

- (a) Features V and X are marked in **Figure 2**. How are they interpreted in **Figure 1**? (2 marks)
- (b) What are the conventions Y and Z as shown in **Figure 1**? (2 marks)
- (a) V = stone-lined pit; X = wall-line stain or foundation trench. 1 mark each
- (b) Y = hachure; Z = line of section. 1 mark each

Question 4

Study **Figure 3**.

Identify the evidence for different periods of activity. (6 marks)

- L1: One or two general points with no explanation and no reference to source **or** confused with some merit. 1
- L2: L1 with implicit reference to plan or one or two generic yet developed points with no reference to source. 2-3
- L3: Two or more developed points with implicit reference to source or one with explicit reference to source. 4
- L4: Two or more developed points with explicit reference to source. 5-6

Expect: alignment of features; shape; inter-cutting; extension of features; arrangement of features with respect to others, contexts.

Question 5

Study **Figure 4** and use your own knowledge.

Describe and explain the methods that archaeologists might have used to excavate and record these ring-ditches. (10 marks)

- L1: Generic undeveloped points on excavation or recording. 1-2
- L2: Both parts of L1 or responses with implicit or thin reference to the source material. 3-4
- L3: More focused yet unbalanced responses considering the excavation and/or recording of the feature. 5-7
- L4: Focused and balanced responses on the recording **and** excavation of the feature. 8-10

Expect: Open Area; Quadrant: Trial trenches; Baulks; reference to sectioning; defining feature; dealing with bone stains/charcoal; context sheets; feature sheets; photography; drawing (plan and section). Level of detail and clarity to determine place in Levels 3 and 4.

Question 6

Study **Figure 5** and use your own knowledge.

- (a) How can archaeologists obtain samples for testing soil chemistry? (4 marks)
- (b) What information can archaeologists gain from chemical testing of soil?(4 marks)
- (a) L1: Partial description of appropriate method(s). **1-2**
L2: Detailed description of appropriate method(s). **3-4**
- (b) L1: List of undeveloped points. **1-2**
L2: L1 with explanation. **3-4**

Expect: (a) Coring/augering; bulk sampling from sections; sampling from the material within a feature; placing material in sealed bags/containers; field samples; test pits; shovel pits.

(b) pH; phosphates; animal husbandry; presence of graves; preservation; past land use; ammonia; lipids; trace metals; industrial activity; faeces; urine.

Question 7

Use **Figures 1 to 5** and your own knowledge.

Plas Gogerddan was a rescue excavation. Discuss the similarities and differences between **both** the objectives **and** the techniques of rescue and research excavations. (12 marks)

- L1: Generalised undeveloped points, e.g. rushed vs. time; planned vs. less planned. **1-3**
- L2: Unbalanced responses discussing objectives and/or techniques for **primarily** rescue **or** research excavation **or** objectives **or** technique of both. Perhaps some thin exemplification. **4-6**
- L3: L2 with reference to sources and/or fuller examples or more balanced yet generic explanation. **7-9**
- L4: Balanced responses discussing objectives and techniques for rescue **and** research with reference to sources or examples. **10-12**

Objectives: Rescue: preservation by record; to collect information and artefacts; save the site; get things prior to development; mitigation strategies; awareness of PPG16.

Research: As above **and** answer academic questions; train staff; try out new skills/techniques; pursue local/national objectives; develop regional studies; undertake comparative research.

Techniques: Similar for both, but research may use extensive; more pre-excavation survey. Rescue may use more sampling, trenches, pits.