Author(s): Derek France & Chris Ribchester

Title: Producing websites for assessment: A case study from a Level 1 fieldwork module

Date: 2004

Originally published in: Journal of Geography in Higher Education


Version of item: Author's post-print

Available at: http://hdl.handle.net/10034/15233
Producing Websites for Assessment: A Case Study from a Level 1 Fieldwork Module

DEREK FRANCE & CHRIS RIBCHESTER
Geography Department, University College Chester, UK

Correspondence address: Derek France, Geography Department, Beswick Building, University College Chester, Parkgate Road, Chester, CH1 4BJ, UK.
Email: d.france@chester.ac.uk
Abstract BSc Single Subject Geography students at University College Chester enrol for a core module that involves the acquisition of fieldwork data, data analysis and project design. One of this module's assessment exercises requires students to 'write up' a field-based research project as a functioning website. This paper explores the practicalities of delivering this type of assessment and of providing support for students. It then discusses tutor perceptions and student feedback, both of which suggest that the website assignment 'adds value' to the core module aims by facilitating the development of C & IT skills, in addition to providing intellectual challenges associated with the selection, integration, presentation and structuring of information.

Keywords: Assessment, websites, C & IT, fieldwork, World Wide Web

Introduction

Communications and information technology (C & IT) is a central component of the HE Geography experience (QAA, 2000). This is evident in many ways including the use of GIS (Williams et al., 1999; Summerby-Murray, 2001), computer-based assessment (Charman & Elmes, 1998), CAL software packages (Browne & Funnell, 1998; Towe & Garside, 1998), virtual fieldwork (Dykes et al., 1999; Stainfield et al., 2000), online module support materials (Grattan, 1998; Graham & McNeil, 1999), electronic conferencing (Vincent, 2000), and modelling and simulation exercises (Castleford & Robinson, 1996). In recent years, this engagement with C & IT has been facilitated by the diffusion of Internet technologies and World Wide Web (WWW)-based software (Lemke & Ritter,
Within this context, however, the production of websites for student assessment is relatively new, though innovative early examples can be found in Whalley & Rea's (1998) discussion of 'electronic posters' and Suthren’s (1998) commentary on ‘virtual essays’. Both papers highlight the value of this mode of assessment for integrating the development of academic knowledge and the acquisition of transferable skills. Whalley & Rea describe an exercise within a Level 2 module in which students, working in groups, were required to produce a web-based poster that examined geomorphological principles and landforms. The authors conclude that 'electronic posters’ are liked by students, providing them with important information-handling skills and the opportunity to experiment with content, format and structure, which may be of value to subsequent dissertation work. Suthren (1998) describes an experiment in which students were required to write an "on-line, illustrated, scientific paper" (p. 668) assessing the hazards at a particular volcano site, as part of an optional final-year module in ‘Advanced Studies’. He identifies the enthusiasm that students displayed in completing this work, which was reflected in the final product. He also comments on the challenge of ensuring that all students submit completely functional websites (containing both text and images) and pages that have full copyright permissions, to allow them to be placed on the WWW as opposed to just the university's intranet.

This paper explores how website creation has been integrated into a Level 1 fieldwork module. Although Grattan (1999) discusses an interesting example of this style of work based on fieldwork in Malta, unpublished data collected as part of a recent survey of UK departments by LTSN-GEES (Fletcher et al., 2002) indicated
that there are few examples of learning that combines fieldwork and website production. Grattan believes that "in the middle ground between real virtual environments and the traditional geography fieldcourse, there lies a great opportunity to use electronic media to enhance traditional fieldcourses and promote the acquisition and demonstration of key C & IT skills by geography undergraduates" (Grattan, 1999, p. 5). Responding in part to feedback from the previous year, students were given the option of creating web pages examining a geographical theme from the fieldwork region. He comments on the growing popularity and student take-up of this mode of assessment, its application to a wide range of physical and human geography topics, and how this has enhanced the department's virtual resource base of information on Malta.

Since the programme's inception three years ago, all BSc Single Subject Geography students at University College Chester have pursued a core Level 1 (first-year) module entitled ‘Introductory Field Skills in Geography.’(1) The focus of the module is a residential field course, based at the Field Studies Council's Slapton Ley Centre in South Devon. After the field course, each student is required to ‘write up’ her/his field-based research project as a website, which is subsequently published on the college's intranet.(2) This paper describes the content, organization and assessment of the module, including the strategies used to support students while they are developing their websites. Student perceptions of the value and effectiveness of this type of web-based assessment are evaluated. Finally, consideration is given to practical difficulties, the solutions adopted and some of the future challenges envisaged by the module tutors.

**Delivering the Module**
‘Introductory Field Skills in Geography’ is a Level 1, Semester 2 module (15 credits) that is offered exclusively to Single Subject Geography students, usually a small group of between 15 and 20 students each year. The module aims to: provide tuition in, and direct practical experience of, a range of key physical and human geography fieldwork techniques; introduce students to the key elements of field-based research including project design and primary data collection and analysis; explore different methods of presenting processed field data; and encourage students to work effectively in a small team context. Learning outcomes cover knowledge and understanding, intellectual and cognitive skills, subject-specific skills and key skills. The assessment consists of an oral presentation during the field course (17 per cent), an unseen examination (33 per cent) and the website exercise (50 per cent), which is submitted at the end of the module. The module runs for 12 weeks and, with the exception of the week of the residential field course, has a timetabled slot of three hours each week.

Table 1 sketches out of the overall structure of the module as it was delivered most recently. Logistical and timetable constraints dictate that the residential field course must take place early in the module and so there is only limited time for college-based preparation. Week 1 provides an introduction to the purpose and content of the module, as well as discussion of the safety (risk assessment) and ethical dimensions of physical and human geography fieldwork. The week-long residential field course (week 2) is divided into two parts. The first four days are tutor-directed though with significant opportunities for student data collection and analysis, frequently via group work. The geographical focus of the first part of the field course varies each year but typically includes studies of rural settlement change
(including the use of questionnaires, interviews and secondary census data), the management of Slapton Ley (including water sampling, measuring soil infiltration rates/chemical content and land use mapping), coastal erosion and change (including sediment sampling, measuring beach width/slope angle and scrutinizing historical documents) and management issues in Dartmoor National Park (including landscape evaluation techniques and vegetation surveys). The remaining time is devoted to independent fieldwork, for which students are required to devise and examine specific research questions using some of the techniques studied in the first part of the field course. It is this research that is ultimately presented as a website. Commonly, students build on their initial fieldwork efforts and extend them to encompass a wider range of sites and locations. Examples of research project titles include ‘Investigation of water quality in the tributaries flowing into Slapton Ley’, ‘Service provision and population change in Slapton village’, ‘The study of beach profiles, lithology and sediment variation along Slapton Sands’, ‘Perceptions on the future of the Slapton coast road’, ‘A study to assess the variations in soil characteristics on temporary and permanent pasture’ and ‘Vegetation succession across a shingle bar’. On the final day of the field course, all students receive some preliminary feedback on their research efforts following a field site oral presentation that they are required to deliver.

The first session after returning to Chester consists of a one-hour ‘short-question and answer’ examination and, initially, students often express surprise at being required to sit an examination so early in the module. However, aligning the examination closely to the content of the first four days of the field course makes revision manageable in the short time available and end-of-module feedback
suggests that students largely appreciate the opportunity to ‘get the exam out of the way’ at a time when the field experiences are still ‘fresh in their mind’.

The remainder of the module focuses on the creation of the web-based field report. This is a two-stage process. First, students are required to write up their research as a standard 'scientific' report, which follows accepted academic conventions and structure. As this is the first time the students have been required to undertake this in their HE studies, the teaching session in week 4 devotes extended coverage to the content, structure and writing of such reports. The first drafts of these reports are produced by the end of week 6 and tutors provide written and oral formative feedback on them the following week. Second, the written report is used as the basis for creating a functioning website. It is important to stress that this process is much more than simply posting the written report online and students are required to think carefully about modifying their work so it is appropriate to this new mode of presentation, including more concise and accessible written sections and the use of images. Indeed, experience has shown that the final websites tend to include significantly more images than traditional text-based reports, e.g. field sites, ‘action shots’ of data collection and analytical techniques, maps and diagrams, and this is consistent with McKendrick & Bowden’s observation (1999, p. 18) that audio-visual resources have "much to offer in enhancing the fieldwork experience and maintaining the key role of fieldwork in geographical education". Students must also explore how they can use other characteristics of the WWW, including the extent to which the reader should be guided through the report by the use of linear or non-linear page structures, and how links to external sites can be used in a meaningful manner.
Much effort is devoted to providing students with the skills, resources and 
ultimately confidence to create their own web pages. Experience indicates that the 
key challenge, at least at first, is to convince many students that creating web 
pages is actually a relatively straightforward task. The whole process has been 
simplified greatly in recent years by the development of ‘What You See Is What 
You Get’ (WYSIWYG) authoring tools, which means that there is no requirement to 
learn specific programming skills. Grattan (1999, p. 6) believes "the task is little 
more onerous than word processing".

A three-pronged approach to student support is taken:

- Weeks 5 and 6 focus on the basics of web-page creation and design. For 
  the first two years of the module, tutors provided introductory lectures and 
some written guidelines. This approach was considered adequate but has 
now been replaced by more effective ‘hands-on’ practical sessions in which 
students are provided with exercises to work through at their own pace, with 
tutors in attendance to answer any queries. Introductory training modules 
written by Netskills are used for this purpose.(3)

- One-to-one tutorials cover the final five weeks of the module at which 
  attendance is compulsory. This is an opportunity to discuss the content of, 
and further revisions to, various aspects of the field report and its 
‘translation’ into a website. At first these tutorials tend to be concerned with 
‘finalizing’ the field report but, as the module progresses, these discussions 
focus more on issues of website design and production problems.

- Online materials, including an archive of all of the websites created by 
  students from previous years, are provided. In common with other forms of 
assessment, an opportunity to look at previous examples seems to be
particularly valued with student feedback indicating that they are widely used as an indicator of the structure, presentation and standards required. Therefore, it is important that tutors spend time in the practical and tutorial sessions highlighting clearly both strong and weak examples from previous years. Students are encouraged to draw information from previous websites as a source of secondary data, though for the moment there is little evidence of this happening. A growing stock of digital images of the fieldwork region is stored online, as well as other secondary resources (data, maps, research articles) purchased from the Field Studies Council's centre at Slapton. Any of these can be used by students and incorporated into their websites. The range of online materials is expanding each year and the students appreciate them, although compilation presents a considerable undertaking for module tutors. Indeed, somewhat paradoxically, the commitment required to incorporate newer technologies into modules and to build up digital databases of information may actually encourage the fossilization of fieldwork locations, a potential trend noted by a number of participants at a recent LTSN-GEES workshop on the integration of C & IT and fieldwork (Fletcher et al, 2002). However, the authors concur with Grattan’s (1999) view that both continuity and developing a culture of web-based resources is important and that it is possible to alleviate some student anxieties about this style of assessment by pointing them towards the websites completed successfully in previous years.

An example of a completed website is presented in Figure 1. It comprises a ‘site map’ and two screen shots.
Assessment and Student Feedback

The assignment brief for this exercise lists the specific criteria used to assess the websites, and these criteria are replicated on the student feedback pro-forma (Table 2). Both the specific content of the report and its presentation as a website are evaluated, weighted 65:35 in favour of the former. This weighting is intended to discourage students from spending an excessive amount of time embellishing their web pages at the expense of research report content. The use of clear assessment criteria in this way provides the students with an important reference point when working on this assignment. Assessment criteria were previously used to facilitate peer evaluation though, for the moment, this activity has been dropped because it was perceived (by tutors and students) to be fragmenting the module's overall pattern of assessment. However, there remains significant potential here and experience showed how the ‘24 hour’ availability of the websites on the college's intranet circumvented some of the logistical problems that can be associated with peer review exercises.

Student Perspectives

The discussion in this section draws on five key sources of information from students, with particular emphasis on feedback received over the last two years. In the module’s first year, evaluative comments were provided using the department’s standard end-of-module feedback form. Although this exercise was useful, it was considered that the generic nature of this questionnaire schedule restricted the
potential for students to comment on fieldwork generally and the website assessment exercise in particular. Therefore, the following year, a feedback questionnaire was designed to reflect the particular configuration of this module. The responses to this survey were more comprehensive and also alerted the authors to a number of issues that warranted further exploration. The most recent delivery of the module was scrutinized in greater detail, including both a pre- and post-module questionnaire survey. In the pre-module survey, students were asked to identify which three of the nine stages in the assignment were the most important and to explain why (e.g. ‘presenting the results’ and ‘creating an appropriate structure for the report’); they were also asked a range of questions pertaining to their computing/web-design skills. In the post-module survey students were asked to reflect on the field course experience and the website project. Student confidence in using C & IT and computing, and preference for coursework mode were gauged in both surveys. As is common practice, these surveys were completed anonymously, although a coding system was used so that it was possible to identify how individual students’ opinions changed from the beginning to the end of the module.

The comments provided in these two surveys were used as the basis for further discussion in a focus group consisting of the two tutors and the majority of students who had completed the module in that year. This discussion focused both on practical experiences and on the anticipated benefits that may accrue from completing the module. This proved to be a particularly useful exercise that allowed students to clarify some of the issues raised in the pre- and post-module surveys and identify other points that were not evident from the responses to the structured questionnaires. The experiences here confirm the value of using end-of-
module discussions to gain a deeper insight into student perceptions of a module (Gold et al., 1991, pp. 170-171).

‘Introductory Field Skills in Geography’ is a well-received module. For example, over the last two years, all but one student rated the module as ‘Excellent’ or ‘Good’ overall. Of course, fieldwork is generally viewed positively by students and there is no doubt that the positive reception of this module reflects, at least in part, the opportunity to spend time away from college and to benefit from the widely discussed advantages of field-based tuition and research (e.g. Kern & Carpenter, 1986; Gold et al., 1991, pp. 21-35; Kent et al., 1997). However, there is also a positive evaluation of the website assignment and each year, by the end of the module, the majority of students acknowledge a number of benefits gained from completing the exercise. The following commentary reflects on the strengths of the website assignment and also highlights some potential weaknesses, based on three themes arising from student feedback.

*Development of Computing Skills*

Despite growing computer literacy amongst first-year undergraduates, experience has shown that the majority of students have very little familiarity with website production at the start of the module. Indeed, initial reaction to the task from many students is characterized by a mix of surprise and uncertainty. Twelve of the 15 students who completed the pre-module questionnaire in 2002 expressed some doubt about the website assessment, for example:

I've never made a website and computer skills are lacking in this area.
I have never done this before and have had limited experience with computers.

I am not very computer literate, don’t use computers unless I really have to and know nothing much about the web.

I have never done this before and it seems complicated.

I imagine it being complex and I am not brilliant on computers!

However, end-of-module feedback indicates a change of perception and the initial hesitancy, exemplified in the quotes above, is generally replaced by a sense of accomplishment:

I found it really difficult but a worthwhile exercise.

Did not think I could do it at the beginning but at the end it was a real sense of achievement.

There is also recognition of the acquisition of increasingly useful transferable skills:

Taught me how to design a website for future research projects.

Useful when looking for a job, an additional skill.

The sense of achievement seems to be enhanced by posting the completed websites to the ‘public domain’ on the college’s intranet, a space normally reserved
for tutor-authored materials and official college information. The focus-group discussions with the 2002 cohort emphasized the popularity of this publication because, for example, it is an opportunity to "show people the effort that has gone into a piece of my work" and that it "makes you do a good job". Grattan (1999) highlights similar themes in emphasizing the value of permanently mounting student work to a web server.

The development of specific web-page design skills is clearly viewed positively, but it is perhaps the ‘knock-on’ effects of this assessment exercise on students’ general C & IT abilities that are of greater long-term significance. For example, comparison of the responses to the pre- and post-module questionnaire for 2002 shows an overall increase in confidence levels. More revealing, however, are the qualitative comments recorded by students over the last two years concerning the impact of the module on their general C & IT skills; for example:

This module has had a dramatic effect on my IT skills. Before doing this topic I was not very confident on a computer, but now I am. I enjoyed doing the web page, and found it very useful.

I am now a lot more confident using computers. I have realised through creating this website that computers are easier to use than first thought. I do believe that creating this website was a very valuable experience for me.

My computing skills have improved greatly. I am much more confident with the skills I had and have gained many valuable ones.
I have become more comfortable with the College computers. Also I have learnt how to do a lot more things on the computer than I thought I would.

[I am] Able to access more programmes [and] More confident in using the computers to present work.

For the last two years, students have been asked directly if they would have preferred to present their findings as a traditional written document or as website, if they had been given the choice at the start of the module. In view of all the comments provided above it is not surprising that at the end of the module the majority of students in both years favoured the web site (2002-57 per cent; 2001-72 per cent).

Although the general tenor of student feedback is positive, inevitably reservations are recorded too and not everyone seems to rise to the challenges of the website assignment; for example:

It made me realise even more just how lacking my computer skills are. Although it was interesting, I felt that I panicked!

Have developed some skills although probably not as many as I should have.

Other negative comments have included concerns about access to computing facilities, technical problems, staff availability and the amount of time (relative to other assessment work) that the website takes to complete. These are all important practical issues but, significantly, statements that question the value of
the website exercise per se are lacking.

**Planning and Writing**

Careful planning is an essential prerequisite of an effective website and many tutorial discussions focus on the structure and organization of the web pages and how the user will be able to navigate the finished site. This planning involves, at the very least, creating a ‘map’ of all of the site’s pages and how they link together as well as reflecting on the layout and content of each individual page. Students are encouraged to exploit the flexibility that websites offer and to think carefully about when the user should be allowed access to pages (e.g. from the home index page) and whether the user should be directed down a linear route (e.g. in presenting a chronological sequence of results). Preparation of this nature requires some time and explains why ‘getting started’ is frequently recorded as the biggest challenge of producing a website in student feedback. As one student commented: "you could not get straight into it as you would an essay, it took more planning" and so it is reasonable to speculate that this planning process may heighten student awareness of the structure of research reports. There is also the hint in some student responses that the requirement in good website designs to make the links between the text of different sections (e.g. between the literature review and the discussion of results) encourages deeper consideration of how a research report should be connected and integrated.

A commonly recognized feature of poorly designed websites is the inclusion of large amounts of text on individual pages so that the reader is required to scroll excessively. This potential problem can be alleviated in the planning stage but can also be helped by clear and concise expression of ideas. Interestingly, the focus-
group discussions highlighted student recognition of this and that the website exercise had provided a useful opportunity to practise "getting to the point more effectively" and "condensing text to important details". Once again, it is possible to speculate that this assignment may have positive 'side effects' for other pieces of work in the future. However, at the same time, there is a danger (evident in a number of websites each year) that this assignment may hinder the development of formal academic report-writing skills, as students emulate the relatively chatty and personalized style of many WWW sites.

Presentation
Web-authoring packages facilitate the inclusion of a wide range of colours, fonts, textures and effects into websites and, used effectively, these features can enhance significantly the presentation of any research findings. However, there is no doubt that this diversity of presentational options can serve as a distraction and cause students to place greater emphasis on the layout and format of pages ahead of the academic content. In their guidelines for students, Bullard et al., (2001, p. 402) observe correctly that "one of the biggest challenges that you will face is to prevent the excitement of using a different medium to present your work from overshadowing the academic content". Moreover, an enthusiasm to maximize the use of colours and effects can actually weaken presentation and undermine the readability of the report. However, it is interesting to note that, for some, the opportunity to show more "individuality" and "character" in their work is a particularly valued element of this exercise. The focus-group discussions highlighted a perceived flexibility in website work (in contrast with more traditional modes of assessment), even to the point of resistance to the idea
of being provided with more structured advice on website design. Such comments highlight the importance for tutors of achieving a balance between providing clear guidelines on good practice in website design whilst not being too prescriptive and possibly stifling the opportunity to express individuality.

Problems, Solutions and Future Challenges

The website assignment has been used from the start of this new Level 1 module. Therefore it is difficult to assess precisely how much time has been devoted specifically to developing this work as distinct from all the other tasks associated with planning a new fieldwork-based module. However, undoubtedly, implementing this assignment has been more time-consuming for staff than using a traditional written report, particularly in terms of creating the online materials and supervising students. This was especially true in the first two years of the module. But as the module has matured a number of issues have been resolved, which have helped reduce the module tutor workload:

- Students are now required to use Microsoft FrontPage to create their websites, a decision that reflects the introduction of this software across the college. In previous years, more latitude was allowed in the choice of web editor but the focus on a single piece of software allows the tutor support for students to be concentrated more effectively.
- The introduction of the Netskills training modules has eased the
challenge of teaching the principles and techniques of website creation, and the associated handouts provide students with a basic reference manual to consult when tutors are unavailable.

- The submission arrangements have been refined to ensure that, as far as possible, students deliver fully functional sites. Originally, the final sites were saved on disk, and submitted using the standard centralized method for all coursework assignments. Now, the websites are submitted directly to the module tutors at a specific submission session at the end of module. This enables a final check to take place, any minor problems to be addressed and for the site to be uploaded immediately to the intranet. Disk submission is still acceptable, but a designated session of this nature based in a computer room also allows students to submit their website by downloading directly from their own ‘network space’. Many students prefer this option as it is more secure than a standard floppy disk and also provides more memory to create a larger website.

- The introduction of the compulsory (as opposed to optional) tutorial sessions has helped offset the temptation for some students to ‘put off this assignment until late in the module, which has helped avoid the subsequent ‘last-minute’ demands on tutor time.

- An improvement in the C & IT facilities available locally in the Geography Department has reduced significantly student concerns about access to the necessary hardware resources (particularly PCs and scanners).

It is possible to identify two further challenges, which the tutors aim to address more
directly on the next occasion that this module is delivered:

- Ensuring that the students do not include materials in their websites (usually images or maps) that contravene copyright regulations. The importance of this matter is stressed in the assignment guidelines but experience suggests that students do not tend to adhere closely to this part of the assignment brief. As Suthren (1998) suggests, one probable solution would be to identify adherence to copyright rules as an explicit assessment criterion. Additionally, students can now download maps from the web-based EDINA Digimap facility(5) and, each year, the field course enables tutors to take more photographs of the study region, which serve to bolster the stock of ‘copyright-free’ images online. Furthermore, it is intended to provide students with digital cameras to use when carrying out their research projects.

- In the context of the requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001), ensuring that the student websites are accessible to people with specific learning difficulties. It is likely that the approach to be adopted here will draw particularly on the work of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) and will combine the provision of guidelines on accessible website creation (W3C, 2002a) with the use of software to evaluate the accessibility of web pages (W3C, 2002b; CAST, 2002).

**Conclusion**

‘Introductory Field Skills in Geography’ is concerned with developing student skills in terms of fieldwork data collection, analysis and project design. The website assignment exercise ‘adds value’ to these core module aims by facilitating the
development of C & IT skills as well as providing intellectual challenges associated
with the selection, integration, presentation and structuring of information. Student
feedback generally confirms these tutor perceptions, acknowledging the development
of specific computing skills and increased confidence in using C & IT. Focused
discussions with participating students have highlighted the way that this assignment
may serve to heighten awareness of report structure, increase recognition of the
value of planning, provide practice at presenting ideas more concisely and bestow
greater confidence to acquire new skills. These are important matters at any time, but
are perhaps particularly valuable to level 1 undergraduates at a relatively early stage
in their studies. The experience of this module indicates that website production is an
interesting and worthwhile way of diversifying assessment. In some respects,
fieldwork findings are particularly amenable to electronic presentation in this way but
website creation can be used in a range of assessment contexts and applied to a
wide variety of social and environmental topics. Undeniably, this type of assessment
creates specific logistical and resource challenges and is likely to be labour intensive,
particularly at first, but it is rewarding for tutors to see student surprise at being asked
to produce a website replaced, at the end of the module, by surprise at how much
has been achieved.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank Karen Lawson for transcribing the focus-group
discussion between tutors and students. Some of the research on which this paper is
based was funded by a grant from University College Chester’s Teaching and
Learning Budget. Thanks also to John McKendrick and two anonymous referees for
their helpful comments and guidance.

Notes
1. Students at University College Chester complete a total of 24 modules during their degree programme, eight per level (year). A BSc Single Subject Geography student takes a minimum of 16 geography modules.

2. University College Chester has created its own intranet system, called IBIS. In common with most virtual learning environments, designated areas are provided in which tutors can publish support materials for individual modules.

3. University College Chester subscribes to the Netskills Gold scheme, which allows any of the 50 plus Netskills training modules to be used for teaching purposes. The specific modules used in this module are ‘Creating Web Pages Using FrontPage 2000’ and ‘Managing Your Web Site Using FrontPage 2000’. The presentation Tools For Creating Web Pages contains useful introductory information for the beginner (further details at http://www.netskills.ac.uk).

4. It is important to remember that creating the materials for a website will usually involve the use of more than just the web-page editor (e.g. image-editing software and drawing packages).

5. For more information see http://edina.ed.ac.uk/digimap/

References


QAA (2000) Geography Subject Benchmark Statements (Gloucester: QAA).
Table 1. Module structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction and preparation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Residential field course, including oral presentation assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Unseen examination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Guidance on writing a field report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 &amp; 6</td>
<td>C &amp; IT practical sessions: introduction to website creation and design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Formative feedback on field report drafts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-12</td>
<td>Tutorials: field reports and web site creation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Website assignment assessment criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research project component</th>
<th>Website component</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research objectives</td>
<td>Structure/design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project rationale/justification</td>
<td>Hyperlinks work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background reading</td>
<td>Ease of use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods of data collection (design and execution)</td>
<td>Use of colour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods of analysis (design and execution)</td>
<td>Use of images</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation/understanding</td>
<td>Overall presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td>Degree of innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critique</td>
<td>Quality of English/writing style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
1. Each component is evaluated using a five-point Likert scale ranging from Excellent (1) to Poor (5).
2. General comments are provided and a grade awarded for each assessment component.
3. The research project component comprises 65% of the total mark.