

CASE STUDY:

# Edexcel and CCEA

## GCSE Science and Geography

As part of Edexcel and CCEA’s “Paperless Examinations” project, BTL were asked to develop a set of trial GCSE examinations at Foundation and Higher Levels in Physics, Biology, Chemistry and Geography. These examinations have been trialled in UK schools with approximately 1000 candidates. The examinations were designed by the examiners who prepare the paper examinations, and use a full range of innovative media.

This project took place alongside the Key and Basic Skills development, but had substantially different objectives. The first part of the project involved the development of innovative questions which:

- Made the most of the multimedia, and allowed students to give complex responses.
- Were written by experienced examiners, and met both their requirements and aspirations for future GCSE examinations.

We achieved this by placing question producers (technologists and visual designers) with the writers and “brainstorming and prototyping” items, some examples of which are shown here.

The development work was piloted in a large number of schools in order to prove the following:

- That rich visual and audible media could be delivered in a stable and timely fashion (and securely) to PCs typically found in schools and colleges.
- That the end-to-end system could be used in practice for the highest stakes examinations (i.e. GCSEs)
- That the overall effort expended on complex examination content and marking techniques was worthwhile in terms of tangible benefits to the assessment process.

### The Results

The exams have been trialled with approximately 1000 students, and marked by a team of examiners working in a marking centre. The results are very encouraging. In particular, students found the tests very accessible (we initially had concerns about the ICT skills challenge of answering more complex questions), and performance appears comparable to paper. We are now planning for rollout of this service with the awarding bodies.

For further information about BTL and its product offering, please visit <http://www.btl.com>

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