

Geography

Geography is, by its nature, ever changing in so far as it studies the earth and its life. As a teaching subject it is undergoing major changes.

It now provides a valuable bridge subject between science and the humanities: in itself it has become more of an enquiring subject working as it does at different levels, from local to regional, national, international and world.



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The A Level specification we follow is a radical change from traditional “regional geography” and has adapted to take on board new issues and methods of study. The blend of theory and practical work has made it one of the most popular A Level choices nationally.

We follow the new OCR specification which is a balanced mix of existing ideas in Geography with newer issues. The general theme is the concept of “Change in Geography” concerning the physical landscape and human process and activities. At A Level we build on these themes and draw together all the strands of geography.

The basic aim of the specification is to enable students to arrive at an understanding of how and why differences exist between different areas of the earth and the general theme of change in the geographical world.

It is intended that this specification will facilitate a variety of modes of learning, teaching methods and approaches to Geography and will provide candidates with the opportunity to:

- study geographical change as a means of understanding the geographical themes identified in the specification;
- understand that physical and human elements in Geography are closely interrelated and interact with each other;
- appreciate that the geographical changes within a particular place may be affected by decisions made and processes occurring in other places;
- develop a range of skills including enquiry skills, problem solving, decision-making and report writing;

- appreciate the contribution which Geography, with its various philosophies and approaches, can make to understanding contemporary issues;
- realise that geographical studies are concerned with explanations and understanding which, because of the complexity of the world, may be tentative and incomplete.

While there is a jump from GCSE to A Level in standard the overall approach is not too dissimilar - using data response and practical techniques to increase the awareness of the inter-relationships within the discipline. L6th study is closely akin to the GCSE style, with short questions and limited extended writing required. The A Level (U6th) course involves essays and a synoptic approach and more extended writing. There is also an element of decision making within the synoptic paper.

Fieldwork is essential: much use is therefore made of the plentiful suitable field locations around us to illustrate physical and human aspects of the subject. A commitment to fieldwork is one of the prerequisites of an aspirant geographer! There is some statistical work but this should not frighten the non-mathematically inclined.

Geography is treated in school and in universities as a link subject between the Arts and Sciences. It has a foot in both camps. As such, it is a useful subject as a step to many career openings.

Content Overview		Assessment Overview
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape Systems • Earth’s Life Support Systems • Geographical Skills 	Physical systems 1 hour 45-minute written paper	24% of total A level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing Spaces; Making Places • Global Connections • Geographical Skills 	Human interactions 1 hour 45-minute written paper	24% of total A level
Optionality – study 2 of 5: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Change • Disease Dilemmas • Exploring Oceans • Future of Food • Hazardous Earth 	Geographical debates 2 hours 30-minute written paper	32% of total A level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent Investigation 	Investigative geography Non-examination assessment	20% of total A level