

Geography GCSE (Optional)

Board: AQA

Skills

Geography is a multi-disciplinary subject which calls on a wide range of skills. These skills include analysis and interpretation of maps, diagrams, photos, cartoons and graphs. Furthermore, students develop skills in collecting and analysing and evaluating data from both primary and secondary sources, including self-collected fieldwork data. Students are supported in structuring extended written responses, integrating terminology and communicating using high quality written English. ICT skills are also reinforced throughout the course with students being supported in the use of PowerPoint and Excel software as well as the use and manipulation of basic geographical information systems (GIS) and online questionnaire software using Microsoft Forms. Students will also undertake mathematical calculations such as calculating averages, percentage and percentage increase/decrease. Students also develop skills of research and evaluation of online sources. In addition, students are taught essential revision skills and exam technique in preparation for their GCSE exams.

Knowledge

Geography is an incredibly broad subject that examines a wide range of topic material. Central to this idea is an understanding of geographical location which helps set the context for the various places and themes that we explore. Locations are examined at a range of scales from local through to global. Both physical and human geography are examined with explicit links made between the natural and human world made and how they interact. Topics are current and varied and range from investigating river dynamics, climate change, and global hazards to resource management, urban challenges and economic development. In addition to topic material, students gain an appreciation of the value of independent fieldwork in developing enhanced knowledge and following a route to enquiry. Central to everything we do is helping students gain knowledge and understanding of the relevance of their learning to their own lives and future career paths.

Assessment

There are 3 units in the Geography GCSE course, two worth 35% and one worth 30% of the final grade

Paper 1	Living with the Physical Environment (1 hour 30 min) 35% of course This paper focuses on physical processes and landforms
Paper 2	Challenges in Human Environments (1 hour 30 min) 35% of course This paper focuses on human processes and interactions with the physical environment
Paper 3	Geographical Application (1 hour) 30% of course This paper assesses fieldwork data collection and examines students' broader knowledge understanding and application through a pre-release synoptic component. The pandemic has disrupted fieldtrips in recent years which has meant experiences will not be

assessed in 2022 exams. Currently, it is hoped that those students in year 10 preparing for exams in 2023 and beyond will get the chance to experience fieldwork and therefore will be assessed fully in this paper.

Fieldtrips enable students to experience their learning first hand and to collect their own data on a specific environment in groups with help from their teachers. Students will then analyse their data and write up their conclusions to help prepare them to answer fieldwork-related questions in their Paper 3 exam. Field work is compulsory and is undertaken during 2 single day excursions, one in year 10 and one in year 11. One trip will a river environment in the Quantock Hills while the other focuses on urban regeneration in the local context of Bristol. The cost is expected to be somewhere around £50 for the two trips.

Assessment

As already discussed above, there are 3 papers linked to the current draft AQA specification. More information on these papers is provided below.

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| Paper 1 | Living with the Physical Environment |
| | Section A: Challenge of Natural Hazards |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tectonic Hazards• Weather and Climate |
| | Section B: Physical Landscapes in the UK |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coast• Rivers |
| | Section C: Living World |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ecosystems and Tropical Rainforest• Hot Deserts |
| Paper 2 | Challenges in the Human Environment |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Urban Issues and Challenges• Changing Economic World• Resource Management (with a focus on Energy) |
| Paper 3 | Geographical Application |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Issue Evaluation (from pre-release)• Fieldwork (human and physical) |

For further details, please see your Geography teacher or Mr Killen (Head of Geography) or use the following link to the main exam board website

<http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/geography/specifications/AQA-8035-SP-2016-V1-0.PDF>