

GEOGRAPHY Course Code Gg
Edexcel 9GEO
Head of Department: Mr P King LLB

Course entry requirements : GCSE Grade 7 at GCSE Geography

Geography studies the distribution of things at or near the Earth's surface. Geographers seek to describe and explain these patterns and consider the issues that arise as these distributions change over time. Geography is concerned with both people (human geography) and the natural environment (physical geography). As such, geography draws upon virtually all other subject areas to provide a more complete understanding of the world that we experience each day, and of the issues that fill our newspapers every morning.

The A level geography course adopts a thematic approach, drawing on both physical & human geography to provide a genuine understanding of issues facing the world today, including population growth; globalization & economic growth; urbanization; the changing balance of economic, military & cultural power; migration; climate change and resource depletion. This will involve understanding the functioning of the physical systems of rivers, glaciated regions, coastal environments, the ocean, ecosystems and the global climate circulation.

The A level is made up of **three examination papers** plus a 4000 word **independent investigation**. The 2¼ hour examination **Paper 1** focuses on physical geography and is worth 30% of the total UMS marks. **Paper 2** focuses on human geography. It is also 2¼ hours long and worth 30% of the UMS marks. The third paper is the **Synoptic Paper** that draws on the specification content of papers 1 & 2 to consider a real-world geographical issue. It will involve assessing the attitudes and interactions of different groups, including international organizations, national & local government, firms (including transnational corporations), non-governmental organizations, households and individuals.

A **five-day residential field trip** forms an integral part of the A level course. It is a requirement of the specification that students carry out at least four days of practical fieldwork, covering both physical & human geography. Part of this fieldwork is used as a basis for the independent investigation. Understanding of fieldwork skills is also assessed in the synoptic examination paper.

Paper 1 – Physical Geography

Paper 1 covers: **plate tectonics** and tectonic hazards such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions & tsunamis; the **water cycle**, including the drainage basin system, river regimes, the meteorology of precipitation & drought, and the issue of water security; **the carbon cycle**, including the roles of ecosystems, soils & the ocean, fossil fuel energy sources & energy security, and the possible role of the carbon cycle in global climate change; and **landscape processes** in glaciated or coastal regions.

Paper 2 – Human Geography

Paper 2 covers: **globalization** including the role of international organizations, trade blocs and transnational corporations, economic migration & sustainable development; the changing global **balance of power**; global **health, human rights and geopolitical interventions**; and **population, urbanization and the perception of place**.

Geography is a popular A level course with about 40 students in both year 12 and year 13. The department achieves **excellent results**, with an A level A*/A pass rate reaching 70% (including 40% A*s).

(Nov 2018)