

# Course Title: GCSE Geography

Awarding Body: AQA

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## Why study Geography?

Geography is an exciting course which allows students to study both physical and human themes and investigate the links between them.

The specification is relevant and topical, focusing on current events and global priorities, touching on topics such as climate change, gentrification and Brexit, as well as linking to any current news events. The Geography GCSE focuses on the changing world and students are encouraged to understand their role in society by considering different viewpoints, values and attitudes. Lots of this is done through comparison studies between the UK and other notable nations/regions of the world. Geography is one of the best subjects to develop your enquiry skills.

## Course Outline

Geography at GCSE builds on the knowledge, skills and understanding developed in the Lower School. There is no tiered entry; all students sit the same 3 exams giving them the opportunity to achieve any grade from 1-9.

A wide variety of topics are studied, including climate change, poverty, natural features and processes and sustainable resource use. There is a compulsory fieldwork element included in the course and a strong focus on developing geographical and analytical skills.

The course consists of three sections within Geography, assessed in three papers.

Paper	Content	Weighting
<b>1: Living with the Physical Environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Section A: The challenge of natural hazards (tectonics, weather, climate change)</li><li>Section B: The living world (ecosystems, rainforests, hot deserts)</li><li>Section C: Physical landscapes in the UK (coasts, rivers)</li></ul>	35% (88 marks)
<b>2: Challenges in the Human Environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Section A: Urban issues and challenges (urbanisation, rapid urban growth, urban challenges in the UK, sustainable urban development)</li><li>Section B: The changing economic world (economy and quality of life, reducing the development gap, economic development and change).</li><li>Section C: The challenge of resource management (global and UK, energy)</li></ul>	35% (88 marks)
<b>3: Geographical applications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Section A: Issue evaluation (based on pre-released material, released 12 weeks before the final exam)</li><li>Section B: Fieldwork (based on fieldwork undertaken during year 10)</li><li>Geographical skills generally*</li></ul>	30% (76 marks)



\*Geographical skills including comprehension, map, graphical, data and diagram interpretation are assessed in all three exam papers. More information and the full syllabus can be found at:

<http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/geography/gcse/geography-8035>

## Assessment Format

### AQA (1-9) Geography 8035

Students all follow a linear course which is assessed by three terminal examinations at the end of Year 11. Two of the papers are worth 35% each of the overall qualification, and one is worth 30%. In order to complete Paper 3: Geographical Applications, students will be required to undertake field work, investigating both human and physical environments. Paper 3 also includes a pre-release section for which students receive the information 12 weeks prior to the exam.

The exams will measure how students have achieved the following assessment objectives, with different questions examining different AOs:

- AO1: Demonstrate **knowledge** of locations, places, processes, environments, and different scales (15%).
- AO2: Demonstrate geographical **understanding** of concepts and how they are used in relation to places, environments and processes; the interrelationships between places, environments and processes (25%).
- AO3: **Apply** knowledge and understanding to interpret, analyse and evaluate geographical information and issues to make judgements (35%, including 10% applied to fieldwork context(s)).
- AO4: Select, adapt and use a variety of **skills and techniques** to investigate questions and issues and communicate findings (25%, including 5% used to respond to fieldwork data and context(s)).

### What skills will I need to be successful in this subject?

Geography is a subject which relies on a range of skills including observation, investigation, critical thinking, making connections, communication and discussion. Students will need literacy skills to critically discuss source information and require numeracy skills in order to create and interpret maps, graphs and data. To succeed in GCSE Geography, students will need to demonstrate the ability to formulate enquiries, interpret findings and evaluate their own work. The course requires students to be independent learners who have the inclination to extend their own learning beyond the classroom. Geography is concerned with real world and current issues so students must be aware of these. Above all, students will need to be curious about the earth, and be able to apply ideas to new and changing settings

### Possible Careers and Future Education

The Geography GCSE course provides students with the skills and experience to progress onto A-level and beyond, as well as access a wide variety of future careers. Geography is a course which brings together aspects of many other subjects including English, Mathematics and Science and is a subject highly regarded by many employers and further education courses. A Geography GCSE grade 4 or above demonstrates a clear understanding of interdependence on a range of scales and a high degree of critical thinking.

Studying Geography opens many career paths. Students can go on to study courses such as Human or Physical Geography, Environmental Science, Geology, Architecture and International Relations. People with a Geography degree and other qualifications can go on to work in fields such as: Human Rights; Architecture; Town Planning; Interpreting; Aid Working; the Military; Environmental Science; Emergency Services; Teaching; Expedition Managing and GPS Developing, to name but a few.

Geography remains a popular A-level course, ranking in the top 10 choices, and is the most gender-equal qualification at A-level.

