

REVISED GCE AS & A LEVEL
Student Guide
Geography

For first teaching from September 2008

For first award of AS Level in Summer 2009

For first award of A Level in Summer 2010

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Student Guide: Geography

By studying GCE Geography you will learn about geographical concepts and processes, interactions between people and their environment, the challenges of sustainability and the importance of attitudes and values. You will then be able to relate what you have studied to the world around you. The AS course can be taken as a final qualification or as the first half of the A Level qualification. If you wish to obtain a full A Level qualification, you must complete the second half of the course referred to as A2.

Q. Why study Geography?

Geography is relevant, stimulating and interesting.

Whether you just want to broaden your knowledge, plan to continue your studies through further education, or use this course to start your career – this course will provide you with the opportunity to gain transferable skills such as communication, teamwork, analysing, investigation, IT and map reading.

Q. What do I need to be able to take this course?

It is recommended that you have completed a course of study for GCSE Geography before enrolling for this course. However, it is possible for you to take this course without any prior learning or attainment in Geography.

If you are interested in the world around you and would like to understand more about the different cultures and environments that surround you, then GCE Geography would be an excellent choice of study.

Q. What will I study?

There are two units at AS and a further two at A2.



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AS 1	This unit has two sections. In Section A you will learn how to collect data first hand from physical and human environments by using equipment, surveys or questionnaires and use this information to provide a written report. In Section B you will study physical processes and systems and human interaction with them. This will be through a range of scales and in a range of places. The focus will be on rivers, ecosystems and weather.
AS 2	The unit is divided into two sections. Section A will focus on data collection and processing. In Section B you will study human processes, systems and outcomes. This unit will study various aspects of population; rural and urban environments; and development. Through both of the AS units you will learn how to analyse and interpret maps and other imagery as well as how to develop your data processing skills such as drawing annotated sketch maps.
A2 1	This unit has two sections. In Section A, there are three optional units from which you choose two. Option A: Impact of Population Change, Option B: Planning for Sustainable Settlements, and Option C: Issues in Ethnic Diversity. In Section B, you will have the opportunity to investigate global issues and debates that relate to our sustainable future. In this section there will be four themes and you will be required to study one of them which will include undertaking fieldwork using primary data collection techniques.
A2 2	There are two sections in this unit. Section A has three optional units from which you will choose two. Option A: Fluvial and Coastal Environments, Option B: The Nature and Sustainability of Tropical Ecosystems, and Option C: The Dynamic Earth. Section B is a decision-making exercise which will take the form of a case study with a variety of resources. You will then use the skills and techniques you have developed to evaluate the results of analysis and through examining this information, consider alternative choices.

Q. How will I be assessed?

There are a total of four units in this course, two at AS and two at A2. The breakdown of the units is detailed in the table below.

Unit	Type of Assessment
AS 1 Physical Geography (including fieldwork skills) Worth 50% of AS 25% of A Level	1 hour 30 minutes external examination paper and will include an assessment of fieldwork <i>Available in the January and Summer series</i>
AS 2 Human Geography (including skills and techniques) Worth 50% of AS 25% of A Level	1 hour 30 minutes external examination and will include an assessment of skills and techniques <i>Available in the January and Summer series</i>
A2 1 Human Geography and Global Issues Worth 25% of A Level	1 hour and 30 minutes external examination paper <i>Available in the January and Summer series</i>
A2 2 Physical Geography and Decision-Making Worth 25% of A Level	2 hours and 30 minutes external examination paper and will include a decision-making exercise <i>Available in the Summer series</i>

Q. What can I do with a qualification in Geography?

Studying Geography will help also help you gain a greater understanding for example, of people and places, weather systems, tourism, global energy and sustainable development.

This course can help you to develop a wide range of skills that are attractive to employers, for example, it can help to develop your skills in investigating, collating and evaluating information and being able to contribute to important debates on the current issues facing our world today.

You may just wish to study Geography for your own personal interest, but if you wish to continue the study of Geography at degree level, you will need to complete the full A Level course comprising the two units at AS together with the two at A2.

Many of the topics or issues that you will study will be reported in the media, for example, environmental concerns such as pollution, flooding, earthquakes and global warming. This close link between studying Geography and what is going on in the world around you could lead you perhaps to a career in environmental work or with an aid agency.

Many geography students go on to have successful and interesting careers such as urban planners, cartographers, GIS specialists, climatologists, environment managers, weather forecasters, researchers, teachers, demographers, environmental managers and/or hazardous-waste planners.

How can I find out more?

There are a number of ways that you can find out more about studying Geography.

These include:

- Teachers at your school or college
- Students who are already studying the subject
- www.ccea.org.uk/geography
- Geographical Association - www.geography.org.uk
- Royal Geographical Society - www.rgs.org
- Careers advisor
- Library
- UCAS www.ucas.com or CAO www.cao.ie for details on entry requirements for university courses

To view the full specification and the full range of support material available for GCE Geography, please visit the Geography microsite www.ccea.org.uk/geography

