

Subject: Geography	Awarding Body: AQA
Head of Dept: Mrs Cassell	Teachers: Mrs Cassell, Mrs Palmer

Preferred entry requirements: Grade 6 or above in GCSE Geography
If students have not studied GCSE Geography, a discussion with the Head of Department is necessary.

Specification Content

AS	A level
<p>One core human theme and one core physical theme unit (minimum) together with geographical skills and fieldwork.</p> <p>One human and one physical option.</p> <p>Geographical fieldwork investigation (2 days minimum) and geographical skills – tested by examination.</p>	<p>Core themes: Water and carbon cycles, Landscape systems, Global systems and global governance and Changing Places.</p> <p>Physical options: Hazards, Ecosystems under stress and Cold Environments.</p> <p>Human options: Contemporary urban environments, Population and the environment and Resource security.</p> <p>Independent investigation (using both fieldwork and research) – up to 4,000 words.</p> <p>Field work – a minimum of four days fieldwork is required for A level Geography.</p>

Structure of the course:

AS – AS level Geography is separated from A level to become a standalone qualification. 60% of the AS grade is from study of the core content including an assessment of fieldwork and other skills. The non-core 40% is split evenly with physical/human geography and covers a range of people-environment themes and issues. There are two examinations, both of 1 hour 30 minutes, each with a range of short answer and essay questions. Fieldwork skills are tested by examination.

A Level – the course is assessed through two examination papers (each 2 hours 30 minutes) and a written independent investigation. Question types include multiple choice, data response, extended writing and essay questions. The course includes an even mixture of both physical and human geography. 80% of the A level grade is from the two examinations, the final 20% is from the independent investigation.

Methodology:

Learning in Geography is as varied as the subject itself. Students think, engage in debate, watch geographical programmes and research geographical issues. They carry out fieldwork so that statistical and fieldwork techniques can be practised. This has included trips to London, Manchester, Sorrento and Sicily in the last couple of years, as well as paddling in local streams and investigating the changing characteristics of the local area. This new course requires a minimum of 4 days fieldwork and may include a UK residential visit to a specialist fieldwork centre during the course and a series of more local fieldwork days. Students make use of ICT and map skills throughout the course; the iPad is an essential research and learning tool for every lesson. At A level the independent investigation involves research and fieldwork and builds on the skills developed in L6. Students follow geographical events and enjoy becoming knowledgeable about geographical current news events relevant to their studies.

Strengths/Skills developed through studying this subject:

Skills learnt in Geography are highly valued in further education and by employers. Students develop and apply their understanding of geographical concepts and processes to understand and interpret our changing world. They develop their awareness of the complexity of interactions within and between societies, economics, cultures and environments at scales from local to global. By studying contemporary geographical issues an appreciation of a range of moral, ethical, social and cultural issues are engendered. Students develop fieldwork and ICT skills to further enhance their studies. Geographers are able to discuss, research, think and analyse.

What students do with this qualification:

Students can do almost anything with this qualification! It is studied at degree level by many who are not too sure of their future career aspirations, knowing that it will keep their options open. It can be studied as an Arts or a Science degree and there are many different options available at degree level. Careers include cartography, human resources, working in the energy industry, teaching, refugee advisors, charity work, forestry, meteorology, civil engineering, social work, estate agency, travel agency, law, banking and chartered accountancy. A recent study showed that Geography graduates had the lowest unemployment rate of any other subject.