

Geography A Level



Exam Board: AQA

Entry requirements: Grade 4 in GCSE English Language, Grade 5 in GCSE Science and GCSE Geography (if taken)

Intent

Structure

A Level Geography is a 2-year course that encourages students to reflect on the world today. It gives many opportunities to broaden your understanding of the world we live in, challenge your perceptions and helps to develop your investigative and analytical skills.

A-Level Geography offers a natural progression from GCSE topics content. The course follows an “Issues and Impacts” approach to contemporary Geography that offers the opportunities to:

- Engage with the relationship of human populations to each other over space and time
- Study the relationship between human populations with their physical environment at a variety of scales from the local to the global
- Consider your own role in relation to themes and issues being studied and the roles, values and attitudes of others including decision makers

If you have an opinion about any Geographical issue (migration, sustainability, disaster management, climate change to name a few) or if you want to investigate the answers to these complex geographical issues and develop a better understanding of the human and physical world around us then Geography could be the course for you!

Implementation

Content & Sequencing

You will be taught by two teachers from the department, teaching two hours each a week, and each teaching a different topic of study.

The topics of study covered in the two year course:

Unit 1 – Physical Geography

Water and Carbon Cycles where you will investigate the major stores of water and carbon at or near the Earth’s surface and explore the cyclical relationships associated with them. We use *systems theory* to approach this topic and several others in your A-Level course with the understanding that by changing one aspect of a cycle, you are affecting all other parts.

Coastal Systems and Landscapes and we focus on the dynamic environments in which landscapes develop by the interaction of winds, waves, currents and terrestrial and marine processes.

A highlight of this unit is the **Hazards** section where we explore the lithosphere and the atmosphere, which regularly present natural hazards to human populations in catastrophic and dramatic ways.

Ask yourself:

- *Are we destroying our planet for future generations?*
- *The sea is going to win eventually - so why bother protecting coastal areas from erosion?*
- *Why are natural disasters getting more powerful, more frequent and doing more damage?*
- *Should we protect ourselves against hurricanes and earthquakes or are they inevitable and therefore it’s a waste of money?*

Unit 2 – Human Geography

This unit includes **Global Systems and Global Governance**, which focuses on globalisation. We investigate the economic, political and social changes that have come about because of modern technology and explore issues that have become a key feature of the global economy and society in recent decades. We also cover the **Changing Places** topic, which focuses on people’s engagement with places, their experience in them and the qualities they assign to a place with. Lastly **Contemporary Urban Environments** where we look into the growth of cities around the world and the significant environmental and social challenges that they present us.

Ask yourself:

- *Should other countries get involved if a country has a civil war?*
- *Is fair-trade fair?*
- *Is Shoreham changing for the better or worse? Is anyone being left behind in the future of our town?*
- *Can we live in modern cities without destroying the environment?*

Unit 3 – Geographical Investigation (Non-examined assessment/ NEA)

You will have experienced fieldwork as part of your GCSE but now you get the chance to really explore the Geography you care about outside of the classroom! Every 6 form Geographer is required to undertake a week long residential* where we will conduct a full enquiry into a geographical issue of your choosing. The findings of your investigation will be collated to produce a mini-dissertation (NEA) where you will explain your investigation and evaluate your conclusions. Previous

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investigations have covered a huge variety of topics including: place studies, coastal management evaluations, tourism impact assessments, examination of marine processes and many more.

Ask yourself:

- *What about our world interests me and how can I research it?*
- *Are we bad for the environment or is the environment bad for us?*
- *How could I investigate a sensitive issue in an ethical way?*

***Fieldwork:**

During the summer of year 12/ Autumn of year 13 (dates TBC) all pupils will attend a 5 day field trip to Devon where they will create their NEA title and carry out data collection in order to answer their hypothesis (approximate price £350)

Assessment Methods

All work is assessed by staff and externally moderated by an AQA Examiner. Grades awarded from A*- E and are based on both your coursework and externally set exam. Both **Unit 1 and 2** are externally assessed written examinations that consist of:

- 2 hours 30 minutes
- 120 marks
- 40% of A-level

Unit 3 is assessed through the completion of your NEA, which consists of:

- 3,000–4,000 words
- 60 marks
- 20% of A-level
- marked by your teachers and the United Learning Geography advisors
- moderated by AQA

Both coursework and exam is assessed based on 4 criteria:

- AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of places, environments, concepts, processes, interactions and change, at a variety of scales (30–40%).
- AO2: Apply knowledge and understanding in different contexts to interpret, analyse and evaluate geographical information and issues (30–40%).
- AO3: Use a variety of relevant quantitative, qualitative and fieldwork skills to:
 - investigate geographical questions and issues
 - interpret, analyse and evaluate data and evidence
 - construct arguments and draw conclusions (20–30%).



Impact

Onward Progression

Geography is a fantastic subject for opening doors to a range of different future careers. It is always a great subject to have on a CV because employers know you will have a varied and diverse knowledge of the world we live in and a broad skill set which is a requirement of the modern workplace. Geographers go on to study: environmental science, international relations, public sector opportunities as well as other more specific Geography courses. Geography is often well suited to those studying Science or Maths at A-Level, although other humanities subjects do complement the human side of the discipline.

Further information contact

Mr Richard Buttle - Curriculum Lead for KS5 Geography
richard.buttle@shoreham-academy.org

