WGS6 A Level Options
Geography FAQ Information Sheet

Which exam board and courses are studied at A Level?

AQA.

What skills will studying Geography equip me with?

- **Research and analysis**: You'll learn how to collect, analyse, and evaluate data.
- **Communication**: You'll improve your written and oral communication skills, including report writing, academic writing and data presentation.
- **Fieldwork**: You will undertake a range of fieldwork exercises to develop your critical thinking.
- **Problem-solving**: You'll learn how to plan and solve problems.
- **Critical thinking**: You'll learn how to think analytically and critically.
- **Computer literacy**: You'll learn how to use Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and other IT tools.
- **Teamwork**: You'll learn how to work independently and collaboratively, taking on ideas and coming to a consensus.
- **Time management**: You'll learn how to prioritise, plan, and meet deadlines.
- **Environmental literacy**: You will have a good understanding of climate change and the impact on Earth
- **Cultural agility**: You'll learn to be socially and environmentally aware.
- **Creative thinking**: You'll learn to be creative and recognise moral and ethical issues.

Do I need a specific grade at GCSE to access A level?

You should have a grade 6 in your Geography GCSE with any exam board. You should also have at least a grade 6 in English and Maths.

How is the course structured and how will it be taught?

Paper 1: Physical Geography (40% of your grade)

Section A: Water and Carbon Cycles – This topic focuses on the human and natural factors influencing two of Earth's most important systems and how they are interconnected. What impact will climate change have on both of these systems now and in the future?

Section B: Coastal Systems and Landscapes – Here we investigate how coastlines are dynamic systems and constantly changing shape due to a variety of processes. We investigate how coastlines in the UK and further afield must develop resilience to sea level rise in order to manage.

Section C: Hazards – Is there such a thing as a natural hazard? This topic explores a range of hazards and focuses on the physical and increasing human causes of them.

Paper 2: Human Geography (40% of your grade)

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Section A: Global Systems and Governance – What are the main drivers in the global economy? This topic explores globalization across the globe as well as the emerging debate around "global commons".

Section B: Changing places – This topic explores the concept of place and the importance of place in human life and experience. It also explores human attachment to various places and how and why these vary.

Section C: **Resource Security –** This topic investigates the large-scale exploitation of unevenly distributed natural resources and the impact this has on the globe.

Non-examined assessment (NEA) (20% of your grade)

20% of the course is coursework, that is independently written. This is in the form of a 4000-word scientific report relating to any part of the specification. Students are expected to collect fieldwork data, analyse it and evaluate it as part of their NEA. We will start this in year 12 and complete it in year 13.

Who teaches the course?

Dr R. McCartney teaches Paper 1 & Mr Hughes teaches paper 2. Both members of staff deliver the teaching of the NEA.

How is the course resourced?

There are A level textbooks available both printed and electronically. However, students should not rely solely on these for their course. Students will be given exercise books, and they are expected to have their own folders. Within the student shared drive there is also a plethora of resources to support individual topics and skills.

How well do students achieve in Geography?

Students who perform well at GCSE continue to perform well at A-level. NEA marks are particularly strong within the department and students are well supported to achieve their best.

Will I need to do a lot of independent study?

Absolutely – there is an expectation that students complete independent study regularly as part of the course. Students who do not do this will not reach the A/A* grades. Independent study is important for developing a student's depth of knowledge about a topic.

What are typical A level subject choices alongside Geography?

Geography Is a holistic subject that works well with a range of other subject choices. Business studies, History and Economics work well alongside the Human aspect of the course and Biology, Physics and Chemistry work well alongside the Physical aspect.

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Do I need to take another subject to support my study of Geography?

Not necessarily – all subjects will offer something in the way of skills and knowledge that will support your A Level study of Geography.

What subject related extracurricular opportunities are offered at A level?

There are 4 fieldwork days across Y12 and Y13 that support the NEA and will help you develop your knowledge of the subject outside of the classroom. There is also the opportunity to conduct academic writing for Routes online Journal and there is an essay writing competition for the RGS If you want to take part.
When you are in Y13 there are also revision sessions at Chester University that will support your exam structure.

How might Geography help me in my next steps / university / career planning?

Geography at A level is a massive step up from GCSE, however, the skills you learn as part of the course put you in a unique position for your university studies. Geography teaches you to write a literature review and how to Harvard reference. It also teaches you data analysis and presentation skills using online software that you are expected to use in higher education.
Geography can also open up careers in a range of fields including those in education, environmental, commerce, industry, transport, energy, tourism and public sectors. There are many transferable skills that also attract employers from business, law and finance.

Other helpful information about studying Geography

With the growing importance of issues such as climate change, migration, environmental degradation, spatial epidemiology and inequalities, geography is one of the most relevant courses you could choose to study. Geography courses are popular, demonstrated by strong completion rates and positive student feedback. Geographers are also highly employable and collectively receive competitive graduate salaries. Above all, geographers have potential to be well-informed global citizens, using their unique combinations of knowledge and skills to make a positive difference in the world.

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