

Geography A Level Handbook



Learning is a treasure that will follow its owner everywhere!



A blue and white globe showing the continents of North and South America. The globe is surrounded by a circular border containing the text 'Learning is a treasure that will follow its owner everywhere!'.

Contents

1. Introduction to Geography A Level: Course Overview
2. Topics covered throughout Year 13 A level
3. Examinations at a glance
4. Learning Expectations
5. Independent Learning
6. Assessment details and deadlines
7. Skills required to achieve an A Level in Geography
8. Sample Exam Questions and Answers
9. Check List
10. Useful links and additional reading

Introduction to Geography A Level: Course Overview

Geography is about places and the people who live in those places. It is about how those places affect and are affected by the people who live there. It is about the relationships between places at a variety of scales, from local to national and regional, right up to global.

However, geographers must understand that the relationships between people and places are never straightforward. They are part of a complex web of interrelationships and the people within that we have to make decisions about matters that can range from the trivial to the important. Part of this course aims to show you that as geographers, we can only understand the outcomes of this decision-making process if we can understand how the decisions were made and how different factors inform the decision makers.

We also have to understand the attitudes and values of other people and groups and factors that influence their decisions.

One of the great strengths of geography is that it tries to understand how the different influences combine to produce the geography of the places we study.



Topics Covered in AS Geography

Year 13

Unit 3 GEOG3 Contemporary Geographical Issues

In this unit, candidates must study at least three of the six sections, at least one from the three physical options and at least one from the three human options.

- Plate Tectonics and Associated Hazards
- Weather and Climate and Associated Hazards
- Ecosystems: Change and Challenge
- World Cities
- Development and Globalisation
- Contemporary Conflicts and Challenges

Elective Modules:

Unit 4A GEO4A Geography Fieldwork Investigation

For Unit 4A, section A, candidates are required to undertake a personal fieldwork investigation of a topic which they independently choose to investigate. There are no restrictions on the type of topic studied, other than it should be geographical and include primary and, where relevant, secondary data collection and should be based on a small area of study and be linked to the content of the specification.

Assessment

Unit 4A will be assessed in a 1½ hour examination covering the learning outcomes set out above in Preparation for Assessment. Students are not allowed to take any reference materials of any sort in to the examination. The examination will test candidates' knowledge and understanding of the subject matter relating to their investigation.

OR

Unit 4B GEO4B Geography Fieldwork Investigation

Unit 4B is an issue evaluation exercise and, as such, demands the development of the range of geographical skills, knowledge and understanding identified in this specification. Unit 4B allows students to extend the content of the specification within the specialised context of issue evaluation. The Advance Information Booklet is released in advance of the examination.

Assessment

Unit 4B will be assessed in a 1½ hour examination covering a selection of the stages set out in **the process of issue evaluation** above. The examination will test students' knowledge and understanding of the subject matter relating to their investigation and its links with other aspects of geography.

Students will also be tested on their ability to apply understanding in unfamiliar contexts, using fieldwork stimulus material.

Examinations at a glance

The Geography department at QK School currently follow the AQA Geography syllabus.

Access to the specification, syllabus and past exam questions and mark schemes can all be found at:

www.aqa.org.uk

A2 Examinations

Unit 3 – GEOG3

Contemporary Geographical Issues

30% of A Level

2 hour 30 minutes written examination

90 marks

Structured short and extended questions, plus an essay

Available January* and June

*January 2011 onwards

Unit 4 – either GEO4A Geography Fieldwork Investigation or GEO4B Geographical Issue Evaluation

20% of A Level

1 hour 30 minutes written examination

60 marks

GEO4A – structured short and extended questions based on candidates' fieldwork investigation and fieldwork skills.

GEO4B – structured short and extended questions based on an Advance Information Booklet, released on 1 November for January examinations and 1 April for June examinations.

Available January and June

Students undertake either GEO4A or GEO4B. They do not sit both examinations.

AS + A2 = A Level

Learning Expectations

1. Students should attend 100% of lessons. If for any reason you miss a lesson you must provide a letter from home, stating a valid reason/s as to why the lesson was missed. Students who miss lessons for valid reasons must:
 - Speak to the teacher before the lesson if possible
 - Complete all class work missed, finding the teacher to ask for help in their own time.
 - Make sure they know all homework deadlines. These must be caught up on.
 - Be up to speed by the next lesson.

2. Students who are more than 5 minutes late for a QK Geography lesson will not be let into the classroom. Consistent lateness to lessons will result in a parental meeting.

3. You will experience a variety of lessons that should appeal to all different types of learners:
 - Discussion based lessons, where the teacher may ask a question and it is up to students to talk amongst each other to find/agree on an answer.
 - ICT based lessons, where pupils will design a PowerPoint and resources for fellow students before spending 10 minutes of the lesson presenting their research.
 - Research lessons where students are given the name of a case study and they must use all resources available within the school to produce a detailed PowerPoint.
 - Written exam practice lessons, where students will complete a range of practice exam questions and develop their exam technique. Almost all lessons will involve written work as it is an effective way to improve your grades for the exam. Students will apply what they have learned in previous lessons to exam style questions, and will assess their answers using the mark scheme.

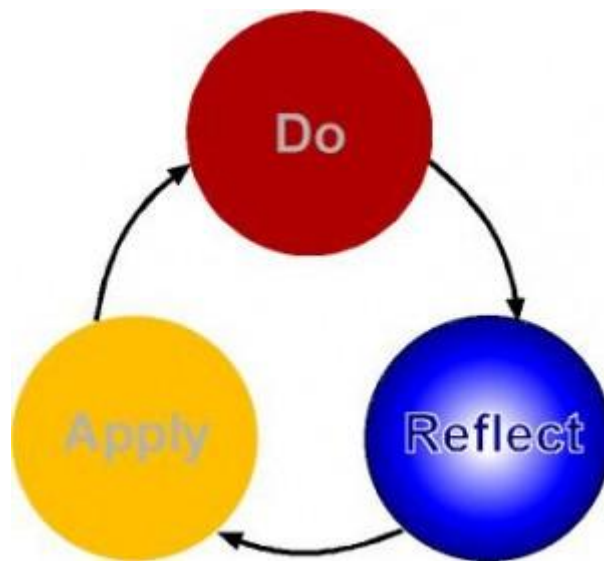
4. Students are expected to bring the correct equipment to every lesson. This involves:
 - Exercise book / lined paper
 - Pen / Pencil
 - Ruler
 - Calculator

Students who do not have this equipment each lesson will be refused into the class until they have purchased the necessary equipment from the Humanities department.

Independent learning

Not all learning for your A/S and A2 Geography is completed in the classroom. You will have to complete independent research, using newspapers, journals and websites. Not all of the material is provided by school and you must use your own intelligence to complete independent work. The majority of reading that will be recommended can be found in the school library.

You can find the location of any resources in the school on Fronter.



Assessment

The QK Geography faculty policy requires students to be assessed regularly throughout the topic, incorporating both exam style questions and extended research projects. This means that students will be given formal feedback with every piece of work that is assessed.

If you need additional help in terms of subject content you can always refer to the AQA website (www.aqa.org.uk) where you can access the syllabus and past papers.

Students will also be asked to self assess their work to show that they can identify successes and weaknesses within their own work.