

Geography

Advanced Level

General Information

Geography has come a long way from the learning of capital cities! The new course that we are offering, from AQA, is also different from previous GCSE studies in that it has less emphasis on case studies and more on concepts and how the world works. What remains key in Geography is the analysis and observation of the relationships between people and the world in which they live.

The course covers an even amount of both human and physical geography, at a variety of scales. Some topics are extended from GCSE level, but there is also an opportunity to study new topic areas.

Geographical skills are an important aspect in aiding the understanding of the subject and we shall develop your ability to use these skills by integrating them into our teaching of the content throughout the course. Such skills include data collection, presentation and analysis.

Fieldwork takes place in Darlington, the western Lake District, Middlesbrough and on the Durham coast

In the second year of study, you complete an independent geographical investigation. This involves data collection in the field and you will define and develop your own question or issue.

As Geography is a diverse and dynamic subject there is always something happening somewhere in the world that is relevant to us. As a result, we like you to be interested in following the news and keeping up to date with what is going on.

Useful / common subject combinations

Geography students combine this subject with many different options. Some choose science-based subjects including Geology while others may be studying Humanities subjects such as History or Sociology. IT and Business also combine well with this subject.



Geography visit to the Lake District

Entry requirements

You should meet the general college entry requirements for advanced level study. Please refer to the current prospectus - advanced programmes, entry requirements. It is preferred that you have at least a grade 4 in Geography though occasionally students study Geography without having studied it at GCSE. You must have a grade 4 in GCSE Maths and English.

In this subject, particular skills and aptitudes will be required, many of which will be demonstrated by students' GCSE profiles.

Entry requirements might be changed in light of curriculum reform.

Geography

Advanced Level

Course content

The course is taught over two years and comprises an equal amount of Human and Physical Geography. Geographical skills are embedded throughout.

Human Geography Topics

- Contemporary Urban Environments, examining growth and change in today's cities, and the challenges presented
- Global Systems and Global Governance, looking at key features of the global economy and society, from big corporations to climate change
- Changing Places, considering the nature and character of locations and people's interaction with them, focused on Darlington and Wasdale in the Western Lake District

Physical Geography Topics

- Coastal Systems, looking at the processes that shape these dynamic environments
- Water and Carbon Cycles, examining the magnitude and significance of these vital processes
- Hazards, focusing on the nature and impacts of events such as volcanic eruptions and hurricanes

Geographical Investigation (Coursework)

- This piece of work leads to a report of 3,000 - 4,000 words. It is based on data collected during fieldwork carried out by students. You conduct your own independent investigation based on a question or issue that you have defined. Data presentation, analysis and extended writing are integral.

Examination details

There are two exams, both of which are taken at the end of the course, plus the written investigation.

- Component 1: **Physical Geography** 2 ½ hours 40% of A Level
- Component 2: **Human Geography** 2 ½ hours 40% of A Level
- Component 3: **Geographical Investigation** Int. assessed 20% of A Level

How it is taught

In class, you generally carry out individual or small group activities, following teacher explanation, questions and class discussion. Geographical skills are taught within the course at appropriate places. Assessment is through structured questions and extended writing and includes aspects of literacy and numeracy. You are expected to back up classroom work with reading from textbooks and other sources of information.

Fieldwork is undertaken during the course and it is a requirement for completion of the A Level that all students participate in this. It is an opportunity to underpin course content, with an emphasis on data collection skills. It also allows you to develop the skills of statistical analysis and data presentation and is something that we find our students actively enjoy!

Careers / HE information

The skills which geographers acquire are greatly valued in the workplace and in education. Many universities are happy to accept Geography as a supporting subject, whatever the course applied for. Geography degree courses are available at all types of university and students can specialise in aspects of the subject that interest them. For example GIS (Geographical Information Systems) is an area where students use ICT skills to present information and images in a digitised form. There are obvious links with Town Planning, Transport management, Social Policy, but geographers are just as likely to become accountants!

Other relevant information

We expect you to be interested in the world around you. Some students are interested in travel and global issues such as the difference in wealth between the rich and poor countries of the world. On a more local scale, issues such as urban deprivation and social differences in cities may be of relevance to students of geography. Whatever the interest, you should read the newspaper and watch the news on a regular basis to keep up to date on current issues.