

Geology

General Information

Newsworthy items such as earthquakes and volcanic eruptions intrigue us, often because the magnitude of these events still seems unstoppable, even in the face of technological advancement. The study of Geology could be your opportunity to discover what has made the earth tick over the last 4,600 million years.

The first year study covers basic Geology topics of minerals, rocks and fossils along with plate tectonics and earth structure. This knowledge is tested through problem solving map work and identification of specimens in a practical examination. Applied Geology examines hazardous environments created by natural Geological phenomena as well as man-made and engineering activities. There is no coursework requirement in the first year. Second year study develops the basic geological knowledge and extends a choice of themes in more detail. You are expected to attend a residential fieldwork course, which provides practice in skills for the final year exam assessment.

No prior study of Geology is necessary for this course but an interest in the outdoors and the environment is important if you wish to enjoy the potential benefits of this course.

Entry requirements

You must have at least a grade 4 in GCSE Science, GCSE Maths and GCSE English. No prior study of Geology is necessary. Hardly any students have any prior experience in studying Geology. You should also meet the general college entry requirements for advanced level study. Please refer to the current prospectus - advanced programmes, entry requirements

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.

Geology

How it is taught

You will be taught the geological theory and practical skills needed to be successful at A level through a range of learning opportunities and practical activities in the classroom. These include developing the ability to solve geological problems by interpreting rock and mineral specimens, photographs, maps, diagrams and numerical data. You will also undertake 4 or 5 days of fieldwork in order to practise your observation and interpretation skills, and to learn how to design accurate field notebooks.

Useful / common subject combinations

Geology is considered to be a science course and some of our students commonly study Geology with a combination from Physics, Maths, Chemistry or Biology.

Many students study Geography with Geology as there is a common link with interest in the environment. Some A Level Art students also study Geology because they enjoy the use of natural materials. Other students combine Geology with Humanities subjects such as History, or IT based subjects such as Media or IT.

Examination details

COMPONENT 1
COMPONENT 2
COMPONENT 3

written examination: 2 hours 15 minutes 35% of the qualification
written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes 30% of the qualification
written examination: 2 hours 35% of the qualification

Advanced Level

(Exam board – Eduqas)
(Specification code: A480)



Geology visit to Chamonix

Course content

The subject content for A level Geology is assessed across three components:

- **Component 1: Geological investigations** includes elements, minerals and rocks, surface and internal processes, geological time and Earth structure and global tectonics.
- **Component 2: Interpreting the Geological Record** includes rock forming processes, rock deformation, past life and past climates, Earth materials and natural resources.
- **Component 3: Geological Themes** includes geohazards, geological map applications, Quaternary geology and geology of the lithosphere.

Advanced Level

Careers / HE information

Geosciences is available as a degree level subject in about 50 universities where both BSc and four year MSc courses exist. New university courses are more applied and cover areas such as Environmental Geology, Petroleum Geology or Geophysics.

Every year, nearly half our A level Geology students move on to Geology or related degree courses. Some choose to support engineering courses with their knowledge of Geology. Physical Geography and Geology as a joint degree is becoming popular. Some students have found Geology useful in Archaeology degrees.

Other relevant information

Many students suited to this course tend to like outdoor pursuits such as fell walking or rock climbing. You are expected to work outside whatever the weather when on fieldtrips and it is useful if you possess waterproofs and suitable footwear. This type of group activity often gives our students a strong sense of group identity.

All exams are taken in June at the end of the second year of the course. There is no coursework.