

AS Level and A Level Geography



Entry Requirements: Geography GCSE Grade 5 or above if studied at GCSE. **In addition, an E grade is needed at AS to progress to the A Level.** **Exam Board:** OCR

Teachers: Mr Kennedy, Mr Reed, Mrs Haigh, Miss Lake

Timetable Organisation: Five lessons per week shared between two teachers.

Main Syllabus Areas:

At AS Level students will study:

Landscape Systems: This topic introduces students to the integrated study of earth surface processes, landforms and resultant landscapes. Students will explore how a glacial landscape can be viewed as system, how glacial landforms develop within this landscape and the influences of both climate and human activity on the landscape. As part of our study we will visit the Lake District for a short residential where we will carry out quantitative and qualitative fieldwork to support the learning in this unit and the fieldwork assessment in the exam.

Changing Spaces; Making places: People are at the heart of places, living their lives, forming attachments and making connections. Places are dynamic, multi-layered and the history and culture of a nation can be found in their buildings, public spaces and towns and cities. Our environment includes a wide variety of places, from rural to urban, small streets to megacities and diversity exists not only between but also within all of these places. Changing Spaces; Making Places allows students to look through a local lens to understand regional, national and global issues.

Disease Dilemas: Diseases do not discriminate who becomes infected or develops symptoms. Diseases can be communicable and noncommunicable and a number of physical and human factors affect an individual's and a community's susceptibility to the risk. The global nature of some diseases in terms of their geographical spread and scale has encouraged international efforts to combat them. The causes of disease are often complex and the impacts even more so especially when dealing with these at epidemic and pandemic levels. Continued research into diseases and developments in pharmaceuticals and 'our' understanding of diseases offers opportunities to combat diseases, however unequal access to drugs and information has implications for communities and countries.

At A Level students will study:

Earth's Life Support Systems: Water and carbon support life on Earth. 71% of the Earth's surface is covered in water however 68% of the freshwater is locked in ice and glaciers. Water is moved and stored beneath our feet and this 30% is critically important to life on Earth. Forests, soils, oceans and the atmosphere all store carbon and yet they are threatened and altered by human activity. This will be examined in detail through the Tropical Rainforest and the Arctic Tundra case studies as well as at a global scale.

Global Connections: Through two overarching themes of global systems and global governance, students will investigate how these shape relationships between citizens, states and organisations around the world. Global systems, including those that regulate and order trade, financial transactions and

migration, create interdependencies, which produce uneven geographies of winners and losers. States and non-state organisations respond to these flows and global systems, which can sometimes act to promote stability, growth and development, but which can also be the cause of inequalities, conflicts and injustice.

Hazardous Earth: Movement of the Earth's land masses, from Pangaea to present day are evidence that forces beneath our feet are at work. Seismic and volcanic activity creates hazards as populations have grown and inhabited more of the Earth. Although hazardous, earthquakes and volcanoes create new landforms and can support life on Earth from flora and fauna to populations. As technology has evolved, the capacity to predict and mitigate against tectonic hazard events has improved although the impact of an event can leave communities and countries devastated.

Method of Assessment

There are two exams at the end of the AS Geography course:

- Landscape and Place: A 2 hour exam worth 60% of the AS grade. It will assess the units of Landscape Systems, Changing Spaces; Making places as well as fieldwork and geographical skills.
- Geographical Debates: A 1 hour 30 minute exam worth 40% of the AS grade. It will assess the Hazardous Earth unit and geographical skills.

A Level – all examined papers taken at the end of Year 13

There are three exams at the end of the A Level course and the independent investigation. The topics studied in Y12 as well as those in Y13 will be assessed.

- Physical Systems: 1 hour 45 minutes (24% of the A Level)
- Human Systems: 1 hour 45 minutes (24% of the A Level)
- Geographical Debates: 2 hours 30 minutes (32% of the A Level)
- Independent investigation: (20% of the A Level)

Qualities Required

The new OCR A Level Geography course favours an enquiry based approach which poses challenging questions about the world we live in. Students should demonstrate a keen interest in how places are changed and moulded by the humans which use them and a fascination with the processes and landforms found in the natural world. We also expect our student's to;

- communicate effectively by learning and using technical vocabulary
- commit to independent research and reading around topics
- carry out practical fieldwork in urban and physical settings
- present, analyse and evaluate a range of geographical data

Links with other subjects

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Geography combines well with most subjects. Past and present students have combined Geography with a diverse range of other subjects which include the Sciences, Mathematics, English Language, Economics, Languages, History, Psychology and Sociology amongst others.

Career Prospects

The diversity of Geography as an academic subject is one of its great strengths. The Russell Group of universities consider Geography to be a facilitating subject which allows access to a wide range of degree courses. Past students have gone on to study popular degrees such as Medicine, Law, Economics, Architecture, Engineering as well as specialising in the Sciences. Those who enjoy the Geography AS Level may continue to study the subject at university, perhaps later specialising in either the human or physical strands, or they may opt for a related degree such as Geology, Environmental Science or Geopolitics amongst others.

Beyond university business leaders today value employees who have a wide array of skills, similar to the qualities developed in Geography, but they also seek to appoint people who can understand the global dimension of business in our globalised economy. Geo-located data is now at the centre of many economic decisions so people who understand the spatial extent of data and its applications are highly sought after. See our display board for ideas of a range of possible careers.

Extension and Enrichment Opportunities

As you would expect we offer a range of fieldwork opportunities which include day trips in the local region, a residential in the Lake District and for students who wish to attend we arrange a study visit to Iceland every two years. We also have good links with the Geographical Association and have access to their local events and meetings.

Co-teachability

The AS course is designed to be co-teachable with the first year of the A level course, so students in any given Year 12 class may be studying for the full AS OR the first year of the A level qualification