

# A LEVEL GEOGRAPHY

**Exam Board:** AQA

**Syllabus Code:** 7037

## Entry Requirement

Candidates are expected to secure at least a grade 6 at GCSE Geography or the equivalent.

## Introduction

The course is taught on a linear program, being assessed at the end of two years. The A Level looks to develop a core knowledge and understanding of certain Human, Physical and Environmental processes. It aims to give boys a sense of space, place, diversity and interaction and allows them to consider the crucial interaction between the Human and the Physical systems at a variety of scales.

The Geography A Level will allow boys to answer structured, data response and extended answer questions in externally assessed written exams, this will be supported by a teacher-assessed independent investigation accounting for 20% of the final qualification. Boys are required to carry out four days of fieldwork over the two years, coupled with frequent investigative research; they do this by synthesizing information found in a range of sources both in printed text and increasingly online.

We believe this qualification encourages boys to reflect on the changing nature of the world in the twenty-first century and forces them to consider ways to influence the social, economic and environmental impacts of such changes.

## Syllabus Content and Assessment

### Physical Geography

This is assessed as a written exam, 2 hours 30 minutes in length and accounting for 40% of the final qualification, in which boys will be

required to answer a selection of multiple choice, short answer and essay questions.

The Physical paper is made up of Core and Option topics:

- **Water and Carbon Cycles (CORE)**  
Focuses on the major stores of water and carbon at or near the Earth's surface and the dynamic cyclical relationships associated with them. The topics are investigated through a systems approach, which invites boys to contemplate the magnitude and significance of the cycles at a variety of scales, their relevance to wider Geography and their central importance for human populations (30% of Paper 1).
- **Coastal Systems and Landscapes**  
Focuses on coastal zones, which are dynamic environments in which landscapes develop by the interaction of winds, waves, currents and terrestrial and marine sediments. The operation and outcomes of fundamental geomorphological processes and their association with distinctive landscapes are readily observable. The topics are investigated through a systems approach and student engagement fosters an informed appreciation of the beauty and diversity of coasts and their importance as human habitats (30% of Paper 1).
- **Hazards**  
Focuses on the lithosphere and the atmosphere, which intermittently but regularly present natural hazards to human populations, often in dramatic and sometimes catastrophic fashion. By exploring the origin and nature of these hazards and the various ways in which people respond to them, boys are able to engage with many dimensions of the

relationships between people and the environments they occupy (40% of Paper 1).

## Human Geography

As with the Human paper, this is a 2 hours 30 minutes exam accounting for 40% of the qualification, in which boys will be required to answer a selection of multiple choice, short answer and essay questions.

The Human paper is made up of Core and Option topics:

- **Global Systems and Global Governance (CORE)**  
Focuses on globalisation - the economic, political and social changes associated with technological and other driving forces which have been a key feature of global economy and society in recent decades. Boys engage with important dimensions of increased interdependence and transformed relationships between peoples, states and environments; with particular emphasis on international trade and access to markets and the governance of the global commons (30% of Paper 2).
- **Changing Places (CORE)**  
Focuses on people's engagement with places, their experience of them and the qualities they ascribe to them, all of which are of fundamental importance in their lives. Boys acknowledge this importance and engage with how places are known and experienced, how their character is appreciated, the factors and processes which impact upon places and how they change and develop over time. Through developing this knowledge, boys will gain understanding of the way in which their own lives and those of others are affected by continuity and change in the nature of places which are of fundamental importance in their lives. (30% of Paper 2).

- **Population and the Environment**  
Explores the relationships between key aspects of physical geography and population numbers, population health and well-being, levels of economic development and the role and impact of the natural environment. Engaging with these themes at different scales fosters opportunities for boys to contemplate the reciprocating relationships between the physical environment and human populations and the relationships between people in their local, national and international communities (40% of Paper 2).

## Geographical Investigation

The geographical investigation is a 3000-4000 word written report accounting for 20% of the qualification. It will relate to one of the topics studied within the Human and Physical papers and is to be undertaken independently with the guidance of a member of the Geography department teaching staff.

Boys will undertake four days of fieldwork in both Human and Physical Geography during the A Level course, studying a variety of environments in the local area and further afield within the UK. Currently this includes a half day study within Bedford as part of the changing places topic, a half day trip to Ickwell nature reserve as part of the water and carbon cycle topic and a 4-day residential trip to Nettlecombe, Exmoor, Somerset, a Field Studies Council centre (this is a chargeable trip).

Fieldwork will form a significant element of the Geographical Investigation. Following group fieldwork, this requires students to work on their own on contextualising, analysing and reporting of their work to produce an independent investigation with an individual title that demonstrates the required fieldwork knowledge, skills and understanding. The investigation requires students to undertake primary and secondary research and the department is well equipped with

computers and resources to allow this to happen.

### **Geographical Skills**

Geographical skills will be integral to all aspects of the course, allowing students to develop their observational and geospatial mapping skills, together with data manipulation and statistical skills including those associated with and arising from fieldwork.