

# Subject Guide: A Level and AS Geography

## Change to all A Levels

Changes are under way for all A levels in all schools and colleges and some awarding bodies are still revising their syllabuses for 2015. As a result, this guide is an illustration of the content but the exact details may change.

The most significant changes in A Levels and AS exams (but see below for the different timescale in this subject) are:

- All assessment for A Levels will be through end of course exams with no practical element in most subjects.
- There will still be AS as one year “half A Levels” but you won’t be able to add an A2 to make them into a full A Level.
- This means if you want a full A Level you will need to decide that at the start of your course.
- You will still be able to combine A Levels with other types of qualifications such as BTECs.
- These changes are happening at different times for different subjects.
- You’ll have lots of support from us before you have to make your final choice of subjects.

Specifics for this subject:

**The first teaching for the new A Level Geography qualification has been delayed by the Government until Sept 2016 leading to an end of course exam in 2018. This means Sept 2015 UTC students will take the AS examination in Sept 2016 followed by the full A Level in 2017.**



## What is Geography?

Geography at this level addresses some of the biggest issues facing us in terms of the planet we inhabit.

Geography allows you to develop a deep understanding of our physical environment and the way it impacts on, and is influenced by, human activity. This helps build your understanding of how decisions are made concerning the use and management of scarce natural resources.

You will study environmental change and the way people respond to this and develop a deep understanding of the interaction of physical and human processes.

Key topics include:

- contrasting natural environments;
- change in urban and rural human environments;
- energy sources and their management;
- population and its impact;
- ecosystems and climate; and
- a major investigation of a geographical hypothesis.

## What GCSEs do I need to study Geography?

You will find it easier to do well in A Level Geography if you to have gained an A\* - C in GCSE Geography and if you have strong grades in Science subjects. If your Science grades are good we will consider you even if you do not have a GCSE in Geography, subject to discussions that show your commitment to making up for any gaps in your knowledge of basic geographical concepts.



## What could I do with it afterwards?

Geography is valued as an entry qualification for many university subjects and combines well with subjects such as Biology, Chemistry, Economics and Computer Science. Occupations that geographers progress to include environmental scientists, geologists, conservation, chartered surveyor, land management, tourism and agriculture/horticulture..



## What form does the assessment take?

The AS (which is also the first half of the A Level) is made up of two compulsory units assessed through external examinations.

The A2 (which makes the AS up into a full A Level) is based on two further units, one of which includes an element of field work.

## Course details

### AS Geography (Year 12)

The AS is made up of two compulsory units.

#### Managing Physical Environments

- River environments (incorporates a fieldwork investigation into this or the marine element) including fluvial landforms, river basins and management.
- Coastal environments including natural change factors, coastal protection and management of human development.
- Cold environments including distinctive characteristics, ecosystem balance, opportunities and constraints.
- Hot at arid/semi-arid environments including distinctive characteristics, ecosystem balance, opportunities and constraints.

#### Managing Change in Human Environments

- Managing urban change and environmental management
- Managing rural change including land use patterns, opportunities and the detection and management of land degradation.
- Energy sources, opportunities & constraints.
- The growth of tourism and sustainability.

### A2 Geography (Year 13)

The A2 develops the concepts covered in the AS and is made up of two further units containing some options:

#### Global Issues (3)

- Environmental issues (at least one):
  - \* Earth systems or
  - \* Environments under threat or
  - \* Climatic hazards
- Economic issues (at least one):
  - \* Population and resources
  - \* Globalisation
  - \* Development and inequalities

#### Geographical Skills

(this includes the fieldwork element of the course)

- Identifying a suitable question or hypothesis
- Developing a plan to conduct the investigation
- Collecting and recording appropriate data
- Presenting the data in appropriate forms
- Analysing and interpreting the data