
GCSE GEOGRAPHY

(8035)

Specification

For teaching from September 2016 onwards
For exams in 2018 onwards

Version 1.0 16 February 2016



2 Specification at a glance

This qualification is linear. Linear means that students will sit all their exams at the end of the course.

2.1 Subject content

Living with the physical environment

- 3.1.1 [Section A: The challenge of natural hazards](#) (page 9)
- 3.1.2 [Section B: The living world](#) (page 12)
- 3.1.3 [Section C: Physical landscapes in the UK](#) (page 14)

Challenges in the human environment

- 3.2.1 [Section A: Urban issues and challenges](#) (page 18)
- 3.2.2 [Section B: The changing economic world](#) (page 19)
- 3.2.3 [Section C: The challenge of resource management](#) (page 22)

Geographical applications

- 3.3.1 [Section A: Issue evaluation](#) (page 26)
- 3.3.2 [Section B: Fieldwork](#) (page 27)

Geographical skills

- 3.4 [Geographical skills](#) (page 29)

2.2 Assessments

Paper 1: Living with the physical environment
<p>What's assessed</p> <p>3.1.1 The challenge of natural hazards, 3.1.2 The living world, 3.1.3 Physical landscapes in the UK, 3.4 Geographical skills</p>
<p>How it's assessed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes • 88 marks (including 3 marks for spelling, punctuation, grammar and specialist terminology (SPaG)) • 35% of GCSE
<p>Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section A: answer all questions (33 marks) • Section B: answer all questions (25 marks) • Section C: answer any two questions from questions 3, 4 and 5 (30 marks) • Question types: multiple-choice, short answer, levels of response, extended prose



Paper 2: Challenges in the human environment

What's assessed

3.2.1 Urban issues and challenges, 3.2.2 The changing economic world, 3.2.3 The challenge of resource management, 3.4 Geographical skills

How it's assessed

- Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes
- 88 marks (including 3 marks for SPaG)
- 35% of GCSE

Questions

- Section A: answer all questions (33 marks)
- Section B: answer all questions (30 marks)
- Section C: answer question 3 and one from questions 4, 5 or 6 (25 marks)
- Question types: multiple-choice, short answer, levels of response, extended prose



Paper 3: Geographical applications

What's assessed

3.3.1 Issue evaluation, 3.3.2 Fieldwork, 3.4 Geographical skills

How it's assessed

- Written exam: 1 hour 15 minutes
- 76 marks (including 6 marks for SPaG)
- 30% of GCSE
- Pre-release resources booklet made available 12 weeks before Paper 3 exam

Questions

- Section A: answer all questions (37 marks)
- Section B: answer all questions (39 marks)
- Question types: multiple-choice, short answer, levels of response, extended prose

3.3 Geographical applications

The Geographical applications unit is designed to be synoptic in that students will be required to draw together knowledge, understanding and skills from the full course of study. It is an opportunity for students to show their breadth of understanding and an evaluative appreciation of the interrelationships between different aspects of geographical study.

3.3.1 Section A: Issue evaluation

This section contributes a critical thinking and problem-solving element to the assessment structure. The assessment will provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate geographical skills and applied knowledge and understanding by looking at a particular issue(s) derived from the specification using secondary sources.

The issue(s) will arise from any aspect of the compulsory sections of the subject content but may extend beyond it through the use of resources in relation to specific unseen contexts. Students develop knowledge and understanding of physical geography themes in unit 3.1 and human geography themes in unit 3.2. This section is synoptic and the assessment will require students to use their learning of more than one of the themes in units 3.1 and 3.2 so that they can analyse a geographical issue at a range of scales, consider and select a possible option in relation to the issue(s) and justify their decision.

A resource booklet will be available twelve weeks before the date of the exam so that students have the opportunity to work through the resources, enabling them to become familiar with the material. Students will not be allowed to take the original resource booklet into the examination room but will be issued with a clean copy in the exam. Sources could include maps at different scales, diagrams, graphs, statistics, photographs, satellite images, sketches, extracts from published materials, and quotes from different interest groups.

Assessment will consist of a series of questions related to a contemporary geographical issue(s), leading to a more extended piece of writing which will involve an evaluative judgement. Students will apply knowledge and understanding to interpret, analyse and evaluate the information and issue(s) in the pre-release resources booklet and the question paper. They will also use geographical skills to set the issue(s) in context and to examine conflicting viewpoints about the issue(s).

Students will develop a critical perspective on the issue(s) studied, consider the points of view of the stakeholders involved, make an appraisal of the advantages and disadvantages, and evaluate the alternatives.

The exam will also require students to consider physical and human interrelationships and to make reasoned justifications for proposed solutions in terms of their likely impact on both people and the physical environment.

3.3.2 Section B: Fieldwork

Students need to undertake **two geographical enquiries**, each of which must include the use of primary data, collected as part of a fieldwork exercise. There should be a clear link between the subject content and geographical enquiries, and the enquiries can be based on any part of the content addressed in units 3.1 and 3.2.

Fieldwork **must** take place outside the classroom and school grounds on at least **two** occasions.

The two enquiries must be carried out in contrasting environments and show an understanding of both physical and human geography. In at least one of the enquiries students are expected to show an understanding about the interaction between physical and human geography.

Students' understanding of the enquiry process will be assessed in the following two ways:

1. questions based on the use of fieldwork materials from an unfamiliar context
2. questions based on students' individual enquiry work. For these questions students will have to identify the titles of their individual enquiries.

Students will be expected to:

1. apply knowledge and understanding to interpret, analyse and evaluate information and issues related to geographical enquiry
2. select, adapt and use a variety of skills and techniques to investigate questions and issues and communicate findings in relation to geographical enquiry.

Geographical enquiry strand	Application of knowledge and understanding, and skills
1. Suitable question for geographical enquiry	<p>The factors that need to be considered when selecting suitable questions/hypotheses for geographical enquiry.</p> <p>The geographical theory/concept underpinning the enquiry.</p> <p>Appropriate sources of primary and secondary evidence, including locations for fieldwork.</p> <p>The potential risks of both human and physical fieldwork and how these risks might be reduced.</p>

Geographical enquiry strand	Application of knowledge and understanding, and skills
2. Selecting, measuring and recording data appropriate to the chosen enquiry	Difference between primary and secondary data. Identification and selection of appropriate physical and human data. Measuring and recording data using different sampling methods. Description and justification of data collection methods.
3. Selecting appropriate ways of processing and presenting fieldwork data	Appreciation that a range of visual, graphical and cartographic methods is available. Selection and accurate use of appropriate presentation methods. Description, explanation and adaptation of presentation methods
4. Describing, analysing and explaining fieldwork data	Description, analysis and explanation of the results of fieldwork data. Establish links between data sets. Use appropriate statistical techniques. Identification of anomalies in fieldwork data.
5. Reaching conclusions	Draw evidenced conclusions in relation to original aims of the enquiry.
6. Evaluation of geographical enquiry	Identification of problems of data collection methods. Identification of limitations of data collected. Suggestions for other data that might be useful. Extent to which conclusions were reliable.

Fieldwork is an essential aspect of geography. It ensures that students are given the opportunity to consolidate and extend their geographical understanding by relating learning to real experiences of the world.

Schools and colleges must submit a written statement as evidence that the fieldwork requirement has been met.

The statement must record the date, location, numbers of students participating, the main issues/questions investigated and the part of the specification content to which the fieldwork is linked. The statement must be signed by the Head of Centre.

Any failure to provide this statement in a timely manner will be treated as malpractice or maladministration (under Ofqual's *General Condition A8 (Malpractice and maladministration)*).

3.4 Geographical skills

Students are required to develop and demonstrate a range of geographical skills, including cartographic, graphical, numerical and statistical skills, throughout their study of the specification. Skills will be assessed in all three written exams. Ordnance Survey (OS) maps or other map extracts may be used in any of the three exams.

3.4.1 Cartographic skills

Cartographic skills relating to a variety of maps at different scales.

Atlas maps:

- use and understand coordinates – latitude and longitude
- recognise and describe distributions and patterns of both human and physical features
- maps based on global and other scales may be used and students may be asked to identify and describe significant features of the physical and human landscape on them, eg population distribution, population movements, transport networks, settlement layout, relief and drainage
- analyse the inter-relationship between physical and human factors on maps and establish associations between observed patterns on thematic maps.

Ordnance Survey maps:

- use and interpret OS maps at a range of scales, including 1:50 000 and 1:25 000 and other maps appropriate to the topic
- use and understand coordinates – four and six-figure grid references
- use and understand scale, distance and direction – measure straight and curved line distances using a variety of scales
- use and understand gradient, contour and spot height
- numerical and statistical information
- identify basic landscape features and describe their characteristics from map evidence
- identify major relief features on maps and relate cross-sectional drawings to relief features
- draw inferences about the physical and human landscape by interpretation of map evidence, including patterns of relief, drainage, settlement, communication and land-use
- interpret cross sections and transects of physical and human landscapes
- describe the physical features as they are shown on large scale maps of two of the following landscapes – coastlines, fluvial and glacial landscapes
- infer human activity from map evidence, including tourism.

Maps in association with photographs:

- be able to compare maps
- sketch maps: draw, label, understand and interpret
- photographs: use and interpret ground, aerial and satellite photographs
- describe human and physical landscapes (landforms, natural vegetation, land-use and settlement) and geographical phenomena from photographs
- draw sketches from photographs
- label and annotate diagrams, maps, graphs, sketches and photographs.

3.4.2 Graphical skills

Graphical skills to:

- select and construct appropriate graphs and charts to present data, using appropriate scales – line charts, bar charts, pie charts, pictograms, histograms with equal class intervals, divided bar, scattergraphs, and population pyramids
- suggest an appropriate form of graphical representation for the data provided
- complete a variety of graphs and maps – choropleth, isoline, dot maps, desire lines, proportional symbols and flow lines
- use and understand gradient, contour and value on isoline maps
- plot information on graphs when axes and scales are provided
- interpret and extract information from different types of maps, graphs and charts, including population pyramids, choropleth maps, flow-line maps, dispersion graphs.

3.4.3 Numerical skills

Numerical skills to:

- demonstrate an understanding of number, area and scales, and the quantitative relationships between units
- design fieldwork data collection sheets and collect data with an understanding of accuracy, sample size and procedures, control groups and reliability
- understand and correctly use proportion and ratio, magnitude and frequency
- draw informed conclusions from numerical data.

3.4.4 Statistical skills

Statistical skills to:

- use appropriate measures of central tendency, spread and cumulative frequency (median, mean, range, quartiles and inter-quartile range, mode and modal class)
- calculate percentage increase or decrease and understand the use of percentiles
- describe relationships in bivariate data: sketch trend lines through scatter plots, draw estimated lines of best fit, make predictions, interpolate and extrapolate trends
- be able to identify weaknesses in selective statistical presentation of data.

3.4.5 Use of qualitative and quantitative data

Use of qualitative and quantitative data from both primary and secondary sources to obtain, illustrate, communicate, interpret, analyse and evaluate geographical information.

Examples of types of data:

- maps
- fieldwork data
- geo-spatial data presented in a geographical information system (GIS) framework
- satellite imagery
- written and digital sources
- visual and graphical sources
- numerical and statistical information.

3.4.6 Formulate enquiry and argument

Students should demonstrate the ability to:

- identify questions and sequences of enquiry
- write descriptively, analytically and critically
- communicate their ideas effectively
- develop an extended written argument
- draw well-evidenced and informed conclusions about geographical questions and issues.

3.4.7 Literacy

Most communication is through the written word, raising the importance of good literacy skills. Students should be able to communicate information in ways suitable for a range of target audiences.

The exams will measure how students have achieved the following assessment objectives.

- AO1: Demonstrate knowledge of locations, places, processes, environments and different scales (15%).
- AO2: Demonstrate geographical understanding of: concepts and how they are used in relation to places, environments and processes; the interrelationships between places, environments and processes (25%).
- AO3: Apply knowledge and understanding to interpret, analyse and evaluate geographical information and issues to make judgements (35%, including 10% applied to fieldwork context(s)).
- AO4: Select, adapt and use a variety of skills and techniques to investigate questions and issues and communicate findings (25%, including 5% used to respond to fieldwork data and context(s)).

Assessment objective weightings for GCSE Geography

Assessment objectives (AOs)	Component weightings (approx %)			Overall weighting (approx %)
	Paper 1	Paper 2	Paper 3	
AO1	7.5	7.5	0	15
AO2	11	11	3	25
AO3	8.5	8.5	18	35
AO4	8	8	9	25
Overall weighting of components	35	35	30	100

4.3 Assessment weightings

The marks awarded on the papers will be scaled to meet the weighting of the components. Students' final marks will be calculated by adding together the scaled marks for each component. Grade boundaries will be set using this total scaled mark. The scaling and total scaled marks are shown in the table below.

Component	Maximum raw mark	Scaling factor	Maximum scaled mark
Paper 1: Living with the physical environment	88	x1	88
Paper 2: Challenges in the human environment	88	x1	88
Paper 3: Geographical applications	76	x1	76
Total scaled mark:			252

4.4 Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG)

Spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) will be assessed against the following criteria: