

AQA A level Geography

Why study Geography at The Sixth Form at Ridgewood?

- Results in 2018 were strong, with 45% of students achieving A*-B and 73% achieving A*-C.
- Students on the course benefit from four compulsory days of fieldwork undertaken over the two years including a city trip, a coastal trip and a two day UK residential to complete the coursework element of the course.
- There have been many successful students who have gone on to study Geography-related degrees, including students recently securing places at the Universities of York and Newcastle.
- The staff teaching the course have extensive and detailed subject knowledge, as well as a real passion for Geography.

What topics will I study in this subject?

Topic	What this means
Paper 1: Physical Component	<p>Water and carbon cycles This section focuses on the major stores of water and carbon at or near the Earth's surface and the dynamic cyclical relationships associated with them. These are major elements in the natural environment and understanding them is fundamental to many aspects of physical Geography.</p> <p>Coastal systems and landscapes This section focuses on coastal zones, which are dynamic environments in which landscapes develop by the interaction of winds, waves, currents and terrestrial and marine sediments.</p> <p>Hazards This section focuses on the lithosphere and the atmosphere, which intermittently but regularly present natural hazards to human populations, often in dramatic and sometimes catastrophic fashion.</p>
Paper 2: Human component	<p>Global systems and global governance This section 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.</p> <p>Changing places This section 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.</p> <p>Population and the environment This section has been designed to explore 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.</p>
Non-Examined Assessment	In this element of the course you will complete an individual investigation which must include data collected in the field. The individual investigation must be based on a question or issue defined and developed by you relating to any part of the specification content. This is the course work element of the course.

What skills will I need in this subject?

Skill	What this skill involves in this subject
Core skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use and annotation of illustrative and visual material: base maps, sketch maps, OS maps (at a variety of scales), diagrams, graphs, field sketches, photographs, geospatial, geo-located and digital imagery • Use of overlays, both physical and electronic • Literacy – use of factual text and discursive/creative material and coding techniques when analysing text • Numeracy – use of number, measure and measurement • Questionnaire and interview techniques
Cartographical skills	Reading and overall interpretation of the map types below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weather maps – including synoptic charts (if applicable) • Atlas maps • Maps with located proportional symbols • Maps showing movement – flow lines, desire lines and trip lines • Maps showing spatial patterns – choropleth, isoline and dot maps
Graphical skills	To be able to create and interpret the different graph types below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Line graphs – simple, comparative, compound and divergent • Bar graphs – simple, comparative, compound and divergent • Scatter graphs, and the use of best fit line • Pie charts and proportional divided circles • Triangular graphs • Graphs with logarithmic scales • Dispersion diagrams
Statistical skills	To be able to complete equations using the following methods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures of central tendency – mean, mode, median • Measures of dispersion – range, inter-quartile range and standard deviation • Inferential and relational statistical techniques to include Spearman’s rank correlation and Chi-square test and the application of significance tests
ICT skills	To be able to competently complete the ICT skills below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of remotely sensed data (as described above in Core skills) • Use of electronic databases • Use of innovative sources of data such as crowd sourcing and ‘big data’ • Use of ICT to generate evidence of many of the skills provided above such as producing maps, graphs and statistical calculations

What will my lessons involve?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills-based lessons involving those detailed above • Lessons based on the fieldwork completed which will be teacher and student led enquiry lessons completing both pre fieldwork preparation and post fieldwork analysis • Diagnostic retrieval quizzes • Teacher led discussions of new information delivered • Analysis and interpretation of figures to answer 6 and 9 mark questions • Essay planning both independently and as a class • Practice of writing parts of extended 20 mark essay questions • Evaluation and debate of key physical and human geographical issues
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What will my independent study involve?

- You should be completing at least 5 hours of independent study per week on top of any specific home learning set by your teacher. The top grades require a level of independent research and knowledge beyond the specification
- Wider reading from key theorists or Geographical texts - a minimum of one piece of wider reading per topic
- Retrieval practice e.g. brain dumps, self-quizzing
- Planning practice questions
- Writing exam style questions in timed conditions (particularly 20 markers)
- Conducting your own research into different fieldwork enquiry questions to form hypotheses completing the fieldwork processes from conception to completion

How will I be assessed?

Percentage exam assessment: 80%

Percentage coursework assessment: 20%

Assessment	Details of assessment
Paper 1	Section A: Water and carbon cycles Section B: Coastal systems and landscapes Section C: Hazards <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Written exam: 2 hours 30 minutes• 120 marks• 40% of A level• Question types: multiple-choice, short answer, levels of response, extended prose
Paper 2	Section A: Global systems and global governance Section B: Changing places Section C: Population and the environment <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Written exam: 2 hours 30 minutes• 120 marks• 40% of A level• Question types: multiple-choice, short answer, levels of response, extended prose
Coursework	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3,000 – 4,000 words• 60 marks• 20% of A level• Your coursework will be initially marked by your teachers and then will be moderated by AQA

How do I know this is the right course for me?

- You enjoy wider reading and research outside of the classroom as the step up from GCSE in terms of independence is vast
- You have excellent geographical skills
- You should feel confident with extended writing and reading
- You should have a real passion for geography

