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Hartismere College



Geography (OCR)

A STUDENT'S GUIDE TO THE A LEVEL IN GEOGRAPHY

What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?

There has never been a better or more important time to study geography. With growing interest in issues such as climate change, migration, environmental degradation and social cohesion, geography is one of the most relevant courses you could choose to study. Geographers are also highly employable. Whatever your passion for the world - fascination with landscapes or concerns about inequality - geography will provide you with knowledge and transferable skills that will reward you personally and prove to prospective employers and universities that you are a well rounded individual.

(Rita Gardner, RGS-IBG Director, 2011)

In order to study this subject, it is usual to have a GCSE qualification in Geography at grade 6 or above.

What will I learn on this A level course?

The course will enable students to:

- develop their knowledge of locations, places, processes and environments, at all geographical scales from local to global across the specification as a whole
- recognise and be able to analyse the complexity of people-environment interactions at all geographical scales, and appreciate how these underpin understanding of some of the key issues facing the world today
- improve their understanding of the ways in which values, attitudes and circumstances have an impact on the relationships between people, place and environment,
- become confident and competent in selecting, using and evaluating a range of quantitative and qualitative skills and approaches, (including observing, collecting and analysing geo-located data) and applying them as an integral part of their studies
- understand the fundamental role of fieldwork as a tool to understand and generate new knowledge about the real world, and become skilled at planning, undertaking and evaluating fieldwork in appropriate situations
- apply geographical knowledge, understanding, skills and approaches in a rigorous way to a range of geographical questions and issues, including those identified in fieldwork, recognising both the contributions and limitations of geography
- develop as critical and reflective learners, able to articulate opinions, suggest relevant new ideas and provide evidenced argument in a range of situations.

What kind of student is this course suitable for?

This course will appeal to students who:

- have an interest in the world around them
- have a naturally enquiring mind
- enjoy researching and investigating issues, processes and places

The course requires students to take part in a number of field work investigations. Students will be required to take part in all fieldwork activities.

What examinations will I have to take to get my qualification?

A Level Geography (OCR)

Examination 1

Physical Systems - 1 hour 30 minutes (66 marks - 24% of total A-level)

- Landscape Systems (Coastal Landscapes)
- Earth's Life Support Systems
- Geographical Skills

Examination 2

Human Interactions - 1 hour 30 minutes (66 marks - 24% of total A-level)

- Changing Spaces; Making Places
- Global Connections (Global Migration & Human Rights)
- Geographical Skills

Examination 3

Geographical Debates - 2 hours 30 minutes (108 marks – 32% of total A-level)

- Disease Dilemmas
- Climate Change
- Geographical skills

Non-examination assessment (NEA)

Independent Investigation Investigative geography (60 marks – 20% of total A-level)

What could I go on to do at the end of my course?

Geography combines well with both arts and science subjects. You may already be thinking ahead to potential university and career choices so it is worth bearing in mind that geography is a broad based subject that really fits well for your future progression. For example, for careers in sustainability and green issues, urban regeneration, energy supply, retail location, managing the effects of hazards and climate change, geography is an obvious choice.

For careers in the world of business, an understanding of global economics forms an important part of geography. If you are thinking of a career in law, human rights, international relations or welfare then geography gives you the opportunity to consider relevant issues such as how we measure development and the consequences of migration on societies.

If you are aiming at a future course in medicine or veterinary medicine then geography is a good choice to give your A Level options the breadth that universities like. You will gain a clear understanding of how the environment affects the health and survival of people, animals and ecosystems as well as enhancing your skills of writing essays and extended reports.

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