

A Level Geography aims to develop an appreciation of the dynamic nature of the subject. This is achieved by a knowledge and understanding of physical and human processes, their interactions and outcomes over both space and time, through the study of places and environments. The course focuses on themes central to an understanding of our changing world. A broad division between physical and human geography is made and each student will be taught by members of staff who are specialists in their field.

The new Edexcel A Level course is linear, meaning it is taught over two years before three final exams are taken. The first paper will examine the physical geography studied in Lower and Upper Sixth, whilst the second paper will examine the human geography studied in Lower and Upper Sixth. Both papers are worth 30% of the total A Level. The third exam is a synoptic paper which tests students' ability to draw geographical conclusions from a combination of physical and human geography data and their own understanding. This paper is worth 20% of the A Level. Students will also undertake an independent geographical investigation which is worth 20% of the final mark.

Lower Sixth

The first year of teaching will study both human and physical geography. Physical geography will focus on tectonics, exploring the causes and distribution of tectonic hazards before considering the impact and management of such hazards. The physical geography course then moves on to look at coastal environments, beginning with coastal processes and landforms before exploring the impacts of coastal erosion and sea level changes and how such challenges can be managed.

Human geography begins by studying globalisation, exploring what it is, what drives it and how it has affected people and places across the world. The second major human geography topic is called Regenerating Places and examines why different places vary demographically and socio-economically before considering how places can be redeveloped and regenerated and the challenges involved in this process.

Students will also undertake both physical and human fieldwork as part of their preparation for their independent geographical investigation. The physical geography fieldwork will be a three day trip that focuses on coasts. At the time of writing, the provisional cost of this trip will be around £335 and will take place on the Holderness Coast, Yorkshire over 4 days. The human geography fieldwork will involve one or two day trips to explore the regeneration projects of Manchester. Students will have the option of using either the coastal or regenerational fieldwork as the basis for their compulsory independent geographical investigation.

Upper Sixth

The teaching content of Upper Sixth builds upon the topics studied in Lower Sixth. Physical geography will begin by studying the water cycle and water insecurity, examining natural water systems at a range of geographical scales before considering the implications of uneven water distribution and challenges of managing this. The second major area of study will be the carbon cycle and energy insecurity, which focuses on the mechanics of the carbon cycle and the impact of human energy consumption. The course concludes by considering the human impact on both the water cycle and the carbon cycle and how this affects global climate change. Human geography starts by studying established and emerging superpowers, their global, political, economic and environmental impacts and considering how these impacts may change over the coming decades. The second major area of study examines issues surrounding migration, national identity and sovereignty.

Resources

Whilst in the classroom, learning is enhanced by a wide range of audio-visual equipment, together with the latest case study material and a wide range of new textbooks. Students are also encouraged to use the Geography section within the library and learning resource centre to broaden their knowledge of the subject. The role of IT is one which is expanding within the subject.

In addition to the fieldwork opportunities provided as part of the course, the department has organised a number of UK and foreign tours, with Iceland, The Azores, Yorkshire and Manchester as recent destinations.

Sixth Form Geographers are encouraged to join the Manchester Geographical Association and frequent trips are organised to attend lectures at the University of Manchester.



Field trip to Yorkshire