

Portland Place School Geography Department

GCSE Geography - AQA A Specification

Structure of the course:

Unit 1: Physical Geography
(written paper – 1 hour 30 minutes – 75 marks – 37.5% of overall GCSE grade)
+
Unit 2: Human Physical Geography
(written paper – 1 hour 30 minutes – 75 marks – 37.5% of overall GCSE grade)
+
Unit 3: Local Fieldwork Investigation
(Controlled assessment – 60 marks – 25% of overall GCSE grade)

The Topics

Year 10:

Unit 1 & 2 – Physical & Human Geography:

- Restless earth
- Tourism
- Water on the land

Unit 3 – Controlled assessment: Water on the Land

Year 11:

Unit 1 & 2 – Physical & Human Geography:

- Development gap
- The coastal zone
- The challenge of urban environments

Unit 1: Physical Geography Programme Summary:

The Restless Earth

- Why is the earth's crust unstable, especially at plate margins?
- What are the different types of **plates** and **plate margins**? Where do you find them?
- How and where do earthquakes occur?
- How and where are **fold mountains**, **ocean trenches**, **composite** and **shield volcanoes** formed?
- How do people use an area of **fold mountains**?
- **Volcanoes:**
 - What are the characteristics of the different types of volcano?
 - What are the causes, effects and responses to volcanic eruptions
- **Super volcanoes:**
 - What are the characteristics of a supervolcano
 - What are the likely effects of an eruption?
- **Earthquakes:**
 - Where do they occur?
 - What are the causes, effects and responses to earthquakes
 - How do the effects and responses differ in countries at different stages of development?
 - How are they measured?
- **Tsunami:**
 - How and why do they occur?
 - What are the causes, effects and responses to tsunami

Water on the Land

- How and why do **river valleys** change downstream from the **upper** to **middle** to **lower course**
- What river **processes** are at work – **erosion**, **transportation** and **deposition**
- What distinct **landforms** result from the changing different processes
- How and why does the water in a river **fluctuate**
- What are the physical and human causes of **flooding**
- How and why do the **effects** of, and **responses** to, flooding vary between areas of contrasting levels of wealth
- **Hard and soft engineering** - which is the better option.
- How are rivers managed to provide **water supply**

The Coastal Zone

- How do **waves** form? Constructive and Destructive Waves.
- How is the coast shaped by **weathering**?
- How is the coast shaped by **mass movement**?
- How is the coast shaped by **erosion**?
- **Landforms** created by Erosion
- How is the coast shaped by **transportation**?
- How is the coast shaped by **deposition**?
- **Landforms** created by Transportation and Deposition?
- **Salt Marshes:** how and why do they develop? Why do they require conservation?
- What causes **cliff collapse**. What problems arise for people and the environment?
- How should the **coast be managed**? What are the **costs and benefits of 'hard' and 'soft' engineering**, and **managed retreat**. Do Shoreline management Plans work?
- The causes and effects of **rising sea levels**

Unit 2: Human Geography Programme Summary

Changing Urban Environments

- What are the **characteristics** and **causes** of urbanization?
- How does **land use** vary in urban areas?
- What are the **issues** for people living in urban areas in richer parts of the world?
 - Housing, Inner city, traffic, multicultural mix, CBD decline
- What are the **issues** for people living in urban areas in poorer parts of the world?
 - Air pollution, water pollution, waste disposal, rapid urbanization and industrialization
- How can these problems be **solved**?
- How can urban living be **sustainable**?

The Development Gap

- What are the traditional ways of **dividing up the world**?
- How can we **measure development**?
- What are the links between measures of development?
- What is '**quality of life**' and '**standard of living**'?
- How can we improve 'quality of life'?
- What **factors make global development inequalities worse**?
 - Environmental, economic, social, political
- How do physical and human factors increase global inequalities?
- How can international efforts **reduce global inequalities**?
 - World trade (Fairtrade and trade groups)
 - Reducing debt
- How successful are **development projects**?
 - Different types of aid
 - Sustainable development
- How do levels of development vary within the **EU**?
- How can the differences in the **EU** be reduced?

Tourism

- How and why has **global tourism** grown?
- How important is tourism in different countries? How does it contribute to their economy?
- The **Butler model** – how does the life cycle of a tourist resort evolve over time?
- How has tourism in the **UK** grown over time?
- What external factors can affect tourism?
- How important economically is tourism in the UK?
- **National Parks in the UK**: why are they popular, what are the impacts of high tourist numbers, how can these problems be resolved to ensure a sustainable future?
- **Mass Tourism**: The positives and negatives of Mass tourism? What are the impacts of high tourist numbers, how can these problems be resolved to ensure a sustainable future?
- **Extreme Environment Tourism**: who travels to extreme destinations, what are the impacts of tourism, how can these problems be resolved to ensure a sustainable future?
- **Ecotourism**: who travels to ecotourism destinations, what are the impacts of tourism, how can these problems be resolved to ensure a sustainable future?
- Can **sustainable tourism** be achieved? Stewardship and Conservation

AQA GCSE: Level Response General Criteria:

Where answers are assessed using a level of response marking system the following general criteria should be used. (Foundation does not have a level 3)

Level 1: Basic

- Knowledge of basic information
- Simple understanding
- Little organisation; few links; little or no detail; uses a limited range of specialist terms
- Reasonable accuracy in the use of spelling, punctuation and grammar
- Text is legible.

Level 2: Clear

- Knowledge of accurate information
- Clear understanding
- Organised answers, with some linkages; occasional detail/exemplar; uses a good range of specialist terms where appropriate
- Considerable accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar
- Text is legible.

Level 3: Detailed

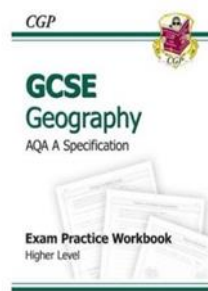
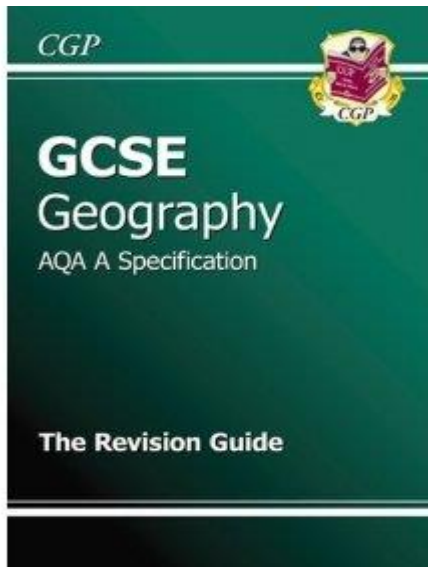
- Knowledge of accurate information appropriately contextualised and/or at correct scale
- Detailed understanding, supported by relevant evidence and exemplars
- Well organized, demonstrating detailed linkages and the inter-relationships between factors
- Clear and fluent expression of ideas in a logical form; uses a wide range of specialist terms where appropriate
- Accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar
- Text is legible
- Level 3 does not always equate to full marks, a perfect answer is not usually expected, even for full marks.

GCSE Revision Resources

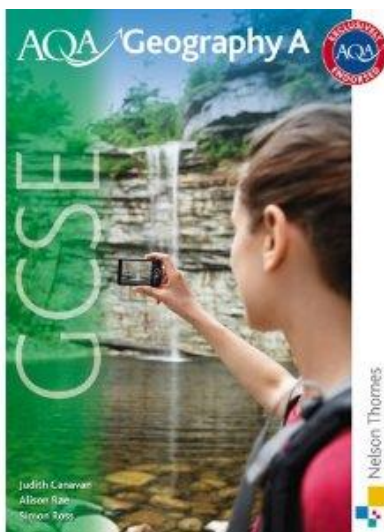
Students have been provided with the following to help with their studies and revision.

We are studying the **GCSE AQA A** Syllabus

Students are given a copy of this **revision guide** in Year 10. It provides excellent support, but should not be relied on as the only source of information. Students are also provided with a question booklet to help with practice questions.



This is the student **textbook**! It provides detailed information and practice questions.



Useful websites:

Students may find the following websites helpful to augment their notes and case study material:

Exam board website: <http://web.aqa.org.uk/>

Exam papers can be found here (**GCSE AQA A** Syllabus)
http://web.aqa.org.uk/admin/gp-ms_finder.php?id=01

Useful sites:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/geography/>

www.coolgeography.co.uk

www.guardian.co.uk

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/>