GCE

AS and A Level Specification

Geography

AS exams 2011 onwards
A2 exams 2011 onwards

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Vertical black lines indicate a significant change or addition to the previous version of this specification.

1 Introduction

1.1 Why choose AQA?

It's a fact that AQA is the UK's favourite exam board and more students receive their academic qualifications from AQA than from any other board. But why does AQA continue to be so popular?

- **Specifications**
  Ours are designed to the highest standards, so teachers, students and their parents can be confident that an AQA award provides an accurate measure of a student's achievements. And the assessment structures have been designed to achieve a balance between rigour, reliability and demands on candidates.

- **Support**
  AQA runs the most extensive programme of support meetings; free of charge in the first years of a new specification and at a very reasonable cost thereafter. These support meetings explain the specification and suggest practical teaching strategies and approaches that really work.

- **Service**
  We are committed to providing an efficient and effective service and we are at the end of the phone when you need to speak to a person about an important issue. We will always try to resolve issues the first time you contact us but, should that not be possible, we will always come back to you (by telephone, email or letter) and keep working with you to find the solution.

- **Ethics**
  AQA is a registered charity. We have no shareholders to pay. We exist solely for the good of education in the UK. Any surplus income is ploughed back into educational research and our service to you, our customers. We don't profit from education, you do.

If you are an existing customer then we thank you for your support. If you are thinking of moving to AQA then we look forward to welcoming you.

1.2 Why choose Geography?

The new specification has been designed to increase the choice offered to teachers and students studying GCE Geography, allowing for specialisation and progression to higher education and employment.

There will be natural progression from GCSE to GCE, ensuring that there is development of content. Students will be given the opportunity to develop fieldwork skills and study geographical issues and impacts.

The qualification allows for two pathways to A Level. This gives students the choice of being assessed on a fieldwork investigation of their choice and fieldwork skills by taking the Geography Fieldwork Investigation paper (Unit 4A) or by taking the Issue Evaluation Paper (Unit 4B).

A key feature of the new specification is the scope for teachers to choose topics to study within Units 1 and 3.

The changes have been made in response to the Government's decision to reform GCE provision in England and Wales, shortly after the Tomlinson Enquiry into GCSE and GCE provision. One of the key elements is to reduce the burden of assessment faced by students and teachers. The aim of the new specification is to retain the popular and successful aspects of the previous Specifications A and B, while reducing the overall content and introducing contemporary and engaging content.

1.3 How do I start using this specification?

Already using the existing AQA Geography Specification A or B?

- Register to receive further information, such as mark schemes, past question papers, details of teacher support meetings, etc, at **http://www.aqa.org.uk/rn/askaqa.php**. Information will be available electronically or in print, for your convenience.
- Tell us that you intend to enter candidates. Then we can make sure that you receive all the material you need for the examinations. This is particularly important where examination material is issued before the final entry deadline. You can let us know by completing the appropriate Intention to Enter and Estimated Entry forms. We will send copies to your Exams Officer and they are also available on our website **http://www.aqa.org.uk/admin/p_entries.html**

Not using the AQA Geography Specification A or B currently?

- Almost all centres in England and Wales use AQA or have used AQA in the past and are approved AQA centres. A small minority are not. If your centre is new to AQA, please contact our centre approval team at **centreapproval@aqa.org.uk**

1.4 How can I find out more?

Ask AQA

You have 24-hour access to useful information and answers to the most commonly-asked questions at **http://www.aqa.org.uk/rn/askaqa.php**

If the answer to your question is not available, you can submit a query for our team. Our target response time is one day.

Teacher Support

Details of the full range of current Teacher Support meetings are available on our website at **http://www.aqa.org.uk/support/teachers.html**

There is also a link to our fast and convenient online booking system for Teacher Support meetings at **http://events.aqa.org.uk/ebooking**

If you need to contact the Teacher Support team, you can call us on 01483 477860 or email us at **teachersupport@aqa.org.uk**

2 Specification at a Glance

AS Examinations

AS Award 1031

Unit 1 – GEOG1

Physical and Human Geography

70% of AS, 35% of A Level

2 hour written examination

120 marks

Structured short and extended questions

Available January* and June *January 2010 onwards

Unit 2 – GEOG2

Geographical Skills

30% of AS, 15% of A Level

1 hour written examination

50 marks

Structured skills and generic fieldwork questions

Available January and June

A2 Examinations

A Level Award 2031

Unit 3 – GEOG3

Contemporary Geographical Issues

30% of A Level

2 hour 30 minutes written examination

90 marks

Structured short and extended questions, plus an essay

Available January* and June *January 2011 onwards

Unit 4 – either **GEO4A Geography Fieldwork Investigation**

or **GEO4B Geographical Issue Evaluation**

20% of A Level

1 hour 30 minutes written examination

60 marks

GEO4A – structured short and extended questions based on candidates' fieldwork investigation and fieldwork skills.

GEO4B – structured short and extended questions based on an Advance Information Booklet, released on 1 November for January examinations and 1 April for June examinations.

Available January and June

AS + A2 = A Level

3 Subject Content

Introduction

Contemporary geography is a subject which explicitly engages with the relationship of human populations to each other over space and time and their relationship with their physical environment at a variety of scales from the local to the global.

All units specified in AQA GCE Geography offer opportunities for candidates to consider:

- their own roles, values and attitudes in relation to themes and issues being studied
- the roles, values and attitudes of others including decision-makers.

In examinations it is always likely that relevant and measured expressions and evaluations of such values and attitudes will be creditworthy and on occasions may be explicitly required by examination questions and tasks.

The subject content follows an issues and impacts approach throughout. It has a developmental structure designed to facilitate progression through the course and beyond to link with the demands of higher level study. Concepts covered at GCSE may be revisited at AS, but not repeated. Concepts covered in AS may be further developed but not repeated at A2.

Course Structure

Unit	Summary of content
Unit 1 Physical and Human Geography	The study of core geographical concepts along with contrasting themes of contemporary or environmental impact, management and sustainability. Candidates must study the core and then select one of the physical options and one of the human options. Core physical section: **Rivers, floods and management** Core human section: **Population change** Optional physical topics: **Cold environments** **Coastal environments** **Hot desert environments and their margins** Optional human topics: **Food supply issues** **Energy issues** **Health issues**
Unit 2 Geographical Skills	A geographical skills paper based on the content of Unit 1. **Skills include:** investigative, cartographic, graphical, ICT and statistical skills.
Unit 3 Contemporary Geographical Issues	An issues-based approach to contemporary geographical themes. Candidates must select three topics: at least one from the physical options and at least one from the human options. Optional physical topics: **Plate tectonics and associated hazards** **Weather and climate and associated hazards** **Ecosystems: change and challenge** Optional Human topics: **World cities** **Development and globalisation** **Contemporary conflicts and challenges**
Unit 4A Geography Fieldwork Investigation	This unit gives candidates the opportunity to extend an area of the subject content into a more detailed fieldwork study. Candidates analyse and evaluate their fieldwork in response to the questions set. In addition, candidates will be assessed on fieldwork skills.
Unit 4B Geographical Issue Evaluation	This unit gives candidates the opportunity to use their skills of analysis, synthesis and evaluation. An advance information booklet is pre-released 2 months prior to the exam to facilitate candidates' research into an area which extends from the specification content.

AS Level

AS Geography content is divided into two sections – Physical and Human Geography. In core physical, candidates' subject knowledge and understanding in key environments is developed. The compulsory rivers, floods and management unit relates to environments familiar with most, if not all, candidates and engages them in the study of the central role of water in landscape development and its management for human welfare purposes. The other three contrasting physical environments each present opportunities for studying distinctive sets of processes raising common themes of environmental impact, management, sustainability and citizenship.

In core human, fundamentals of population in human geography are addressed with an emphasis on change and development over space and time and their geographical implications. Optional elements are specified to give candidates the opportunity to engage with key themes of contemporary relevance with an emphasis on human agency and welfare and/or sustainability aspects.

Unit 2 (Geographical Skills) is specified and examined in such a way as to engage candidates with a range of basic and more sophisticated geographical skills appropriate to the AS specification content.

Overall the AS specification extends, develops and diversifies candidates' likely experience of GCSE Geography, whilst offering opportunities for re-engagement with the subject at AS by candidates who perhaps reluctantly forewent the study of geography at GCSE because of excluded subject combinations.

Thus, AS Geography provides a coherent and relevant programme of study in itself and also a substantial platform for candidates' progress towards successful completion of A2 Geography.

A Level

A2 Geography adopts an issues approach consistent with modern conceptions of the subject, its validity and utility. Concepts, themes and skills covered in AS are extended and developed in A2 in different settings with an opportunity and expectation of higher levels of cognitive and empathetic engagement. In Unit 3 (Contemporary geographical issues) each physical option involves study, at a variety of scales, of important and interesting themes and/or environments and engages candidates with notions of challenge for human populations. Each human option similarly engages candidates with important contemporary themes at a range of scales and should resonate with either their direct or media experience.

Units 4A and 4B are specified so as to provide contrasting approaches to extending and developing subject knowledge and understanding, and exercise geographical skills, whilst meeting the same assessment objectives. Unit 4A (Geography Fieldwork Investigation) casts candidates as active researchers with some responsibility for managing and reflecting on their own learning activities in relation to a topic of particular interest and/or for which there are particular study opportunities. In addition, candidates will be assessed on fieldwork skills. Unit 4B (Geographical Issue Evaluation) casts candidates as active researchers and evaluators of information using geographical knowledge and understanding and skills of analysis, synthesis and evaluation to form measured views on complex issues which may be of considerable significance locally, regionally or globally.

Thus, AS and A2 Geography form distinctive but related elements affording opportunities for specialisation consistent with progression. They combine elements of more traditional conceptions of geography with other elements which reflect some more recent conceptions of geography and its varied interests and subject matter. They combine the firm, concrete and important with a measure of modern eclecticism consistent with challenge, rigour, stimulation and effective preparation for further study both in Geography itself and in many other subjects.

Case Studies

The themes and issues specified in AQA GCE Geography should be illustrated and exemplified by reference to relevant contemporary examples and case studies. Unless otherwise stated, the expectation is that 'contemporary' encompasses the last 30 years. In examinations it is always likely that relevant illustration and exemplification of specification content will be creditworthy. In relation to certain specified themes and issues case study approaches are specified and, with respect to these topics, questions may be set which explicitly require reference to such case studies, e.g. with 'reference to a case study'.

Thus, the study of the geographical themes contained in the specification should always be supported by relevant exemplification and, in some instances, by case study material. In addition, candidates should be given the opportunity to engage in relevant debate and discussion concerning those topics where a variety of legitimate perspectives are held within the population.

3.1 Unit 1 GEOG1 Physical and Human Geography

All candidates must study the core Human and Physical sections.

In addition to the compulsory core sections, at least one of the three Physical options and at least one of the three Human options must be studied.

Core Physical Section

Rivers, floods and management

The drainage basin hydrological cycle: the water balance.

Factors affecting river discharge: the storm hydrograph.

The long profile – changing processes: types of erosion, transportation and deposition, types of load; the Hjulstrom curve.

Valley profiles – long profile and changing cross profile downstream, graded profile, potential and kinetic energy.

Changing channel characteristics – cross profile, wetted perimeter, hydraulic radius, roughness, efficiency, and links to velocity and discharge.

Landforms of fluvial erosion and deposition – potholes, rapids, waterfalls, gorges, meanders, braiding, levees, flood plains and deltas.

Process and impact of rejuvenation – knick points, waterfalls, river terraces and incised meanders.

Magnitude-frequency analysis of flood risk.

Physical and human causes of flooding – **two** case studies of recent flooding events should be undertaken from contrasting areas of the world.

Impact of flooding – **two** case studies of recent flooding events should be undertaken from contrasting areas of the world.

Flood management strategies – to include hard engineering – dams, straightening, building up of levees, diversion spillways, and soft engineering – forecasts and warnings, land use management on floodplain, wetland and river bank conservation and river restoration.

The Physical Options

Cold environments

The global distribution of cold environments – polar (land and marine based), alpine, glacial and periglacial.

Glaciers as systems: glacial budgets.

Ice movement – types of flow: internal deformation, rotational, compressional, extensional and basal sliding; warm and cold based glaciers.

Glacial processes and landscape development. Weathering in cold environments – frost shattering.

Erosional landforms – corries, arêtes, pyramidal peaks, glacial troughs and associated features. Depositional landforms – types of moraine and drumlins.

Fluvioglacial processes – the role of meltwater erosion and deposition. Fluvioglacial landforms – meltwater channels, kames, eskers and outwash plains.

Periglacial processes – nivation, permafrost formation, frost heave, solifluction. Periglacial landforms – nivation hollows, ice wedges, patterned ground, pingos and solifluction lobes.

Exploitation and development in tundra areas and the Southern Ocean. Traditional economies of an indigenous population and recent changes/adaptations. Early resource exploitation by newcomers – whaling and/or sealing. More recent development – oil in Alaska, fishing, tourism. The concept of fragile environments. The potential for sustainable development.

The future of Antarctica – to consider the contemporary issues of conservation, protection, development and sustainability in a wilderness area.

Coastal environments

The coastal system – constructive and destructive waves, tides, sediment sources and cells.

Coastal processes – marine erosion, transportation and deposition; land-based sub-aerial weathering, mass movement and runoff.

Landforms of erosion: headlands and bays, blow holes, arches and stacks, cliffs and wave cut platforms. Landforms of deposition – beaches and associated features: berms, runnels and cusps, spits, bars, dunes and salt marshes.

Case study of coastal erosion – specific physical and human cause(s) and its physical and socio-economic consequences.

Sea level change – eustatic and isostatic change. Coastlines of submergence and emergence and associated landforms. Impact of present and predicted sea level increase.

Case study of coastal flooding – specific physical and human cause(s) and its physical and socio-economic consequences.

Coastal protection objectives and management strategies – hard engineering: sea walls, revetments, rip rap, gabions, groynes and barrages. Soft engineering: beach nourishment, dune regeneration, marsh creation, land use/activity management.

Case studies of **two** contrasting areas – one where hard engineering has been dominant and one where soft engineering has been dominant. To investigate issues relating to costs and benefits of schemes, including the potential for sustainable management.

Hot desert environments and their margins

Location and characteristics of hot deserts and their margins (arid and semi-arid) – climate, soils and vegetation.

Causes of aridity – atmospheric processes relating to pressure, winds, continentality, relief and cold ocean currents.

Arid geomorphological processes: mechanical weathering.

The effect of wind – erosion: deflation and abrasion; transportation; suspension, saltation, surface creep; deposition.

The effect of water – sources: exogenous, endoreic and ephemeral. The role of flooding.

Landforms resulting from – wind action: yardangs, zeugen and sand dunes – water action: pediments, inselbergs, mesas and buttes, salt lakes, alluvial fans, wadis and badlands.

Desertification: distribution of areas at risk, physical and human causes, impact on land, ecosystem and populations.

Case study of desertification in the Sahel – the struggle for survival to include the energy/fuel wood crisis, water supply, the impact on food supply/ farming and livelihoods and coping/management strategies including external aid.

Managing hot desert environments and their margins – to consider and evaluate the strategies adopted with regard to land use and agriculture in areas such as the Sahel and contrast with the development of areas such as south-western USA or southern Spain. Implications and potential for sustainability.

Core Human Section

Population Change

Population indicators – vital rates (birth rate, death rate, fertility rate, infant mortality rate, life expectancy, migration rate and population density) for countries at different stages of development.

Population change: the demographic transition model (5 stages), its validity and applicability in countries at different stages of development.

Population structures at different stages of the demographic transition. The impact of migration on national population structure. The implications of different structures for the balance between population and resources.

Social, economic and political implications of population change. Attempts to manage population change to achieve sustainable development with reference to **two** case studies of countries at different stages of development.

The ways natural population change and migration affect the character of rural and urban areas.

Settlement case studies – comparing **two (or more)** of the following areas – an inner city area, a suburban area, an area of rural/urban fringe and an area of rural settlement. To include reference to characteristics such as: housing, ethnicity, age structure, wealth and employment and the provision of services.

The implications of the above for social welfare.

The Human Options

Food Supply Issues

Global patterns of food supply, consumption and trade. The geopolitics of food.

Contrasting agricultural food production systems – commercial, subsistence, intensive, extensive, arable, livestock, mixed farming.

Managing food supply – strategies to increase production: the Green Revolution, genetic modification and other high technology approaches, land colonisation, land reform, commercialisation, appropriate/intermediate technology solutions.

Managing food supply – strategies to control the level and nature of food production as evidenced in the European Union: subsidies, tariffs, intervention pricing, quotas; non-market policies and environmental stewardship.

Changes in demand: the growing demand from richer countries for high value food exports from poorer countries, all year demand for seasonal foodstuffs, increasing demand for organic produce, moves towards local/regional sourcing of foodstuffs.

Food supplies in a globalising economy: the role of transnational corporations in food production, processing and distribution. Environmental aspects of the global trade in foodstuffs.

The potential for sustainable food supplies.

Case studies of **two** contrasting approaches to managing food supply and demand.

Energy Issues

Types of energy – renewable (flow) resources, non-renewable (stock) resources, primary/secondary energy, the primary energy mix considered in a national context.

Global patterns of energy supply, consumption and trade. Recent changes in these patterns.

The geopolitics of energy – conflict and co-operation in world affairs. The role of transnational corporations in world energy production and distribution.

Environmental impact of energy production – fuel wood gathering; nuclear power and its management. The use of fossil fuels – acid rain, the potential exhaustion of fossil fuels.

The potential for sustainable energy supply and consumption. Renewable energy – biomass, solar power, wind energy, wave energy and tidal energy. Appropriate technology for sustainable development.

Energy conservation – designing homes, workplaces and transport for sustainability.

Case studies at national scale of **two** contrasting approaches to managing energy supply *and demand*.

*At the end of the paragraph above **demand** has been added. This addition will apply in the January 2012 and subsequent examinations.*

Health Issues

Global patterns of health, morbidity and mortality: health in world affairs.

The study of one infectious disease (e.g. malaria, HIV/AIDS) its global distribution and its impact on health, economic development and lifestyle.

The study of one non-communicable disease (e.g. coronary disease, cancer) its global distribution and its impact on health, economic development and lifestyle.

Food and health – malnutrition, periodic famine, obesity.

Contrasting health care approaches in countries at different stages of development.

Health matters in a globalising world economy – transnational corporations and pharmaceutical research, production and distribution; tobacco transnationals.

Regional variations in health and morbidity in the UK.

Factors affecting regional variations in health and morbidity – age structure, income and occupation type, education, environment and pollution.

Age, gender, wealth and their influence on access to facilities for exercise, health care, and good nutrition.

A local case study on the implications of the above for the provision of health care systems.

3.2 Unit 2 GEOG2 Geographical Skills

Candidates will develop the use and application of a variety of geographical skills. These should broaden and deepen existing knowledge of skills which should be employed with a greater degree of independence. A statement of the required skills under the different categories is given in the Skills Checklist (section 3.6). These skills are to be taught as an integral part of Unit 1 Physical and Human Geography (both the compulsory and optional topics) and not as a separate unit. Thus, they are applied appropriately to the content and perceived as such by the candidates.

Assessment

The exam will assess the ability of candidates to apply their knowledge and skills to unseen information/resources and with reference to fieldwork.

A range of skills taken from at least three of the six categories – basic, investigative, ICT, graphical, cartographical and statistical will be examined in each exam series. Investigative skills, and consequently the assessment of fieldwork, will always be tested in this paper. Candidates will therefore need to take part in personal investigative work in the field to ensure familiarity with these.

Question 1 will be set on one of the two compulsory core sections of the physical and human geography from unit 1. This first part of the paper will be based on a variety of resources relating to the topic selected. Question 2 will relate specifically to candidates' own fieldwork and investigative research skills. The fieldwork undertaken by candidates should be linked to the content of the specification.

3.3 Unit 3 GEOG3 Contemporary Geographical Issues

In this unit, candidates must study at least three of the six options, at least one from the three Physical options and at least one from the three Human options.

The Physical Options

Option 1: Plate Tectonics and Associated Hazards

Plate movement

Earth structure, plate tectonics theory: convection currents and sea-floor spreading. Evidence: continental drift and palaeomagnetism.

Destructive, constructive and conservative plate margins. Processes: seismicity and vulcanicity. Associated landforms: young fold mountains, rift valleys, ocean ridges, deep sea trenches and island arcs.

Hot spots associated with plumes of magma and their relationship to plate movement.

Vulcanicity

Variations in the type and frequency of volcanic activity in relation to types of plate margin and types of lava.

Forms of intrusive activity – dykes, sills, batholiths.

*The **above paragraph** has been added. This addition will apply in the January 2012 and subsequent examinations.*

Minor forms of extrusive activity – geysers, hot springs and boiling mud.

Major forms of extrusive activity – types of volcanoes.

Two case studies of recent (ideally within the last 30 years) volcanic events should be undertaken from contrasting areas of the world. In each case, the following should be examined:

- the nature of the volcanic hazard
- the impact of the event
- management of the hazard and responses to the event.

Seismicity

The causes and main characteristics of earthquakes: focus and epicentre; seismic waves and earthquake measurement.

Tsunamis – characteristics and causes.

Two case studies of recent (ideally within the last 30 years) seismic events should be undertaken from contrasting areas of the world. In each case, the following should be examined:

- the nature of the seismic hazard;
- the impact of the event;
- management of the hazard and responses to the event.

Option 2: Weather and Climate and Associated Hazards

Major climate controls

The structure of the atmosphere, the atmospheric heat budget, the general atmospheric circulation, planetary surface winds, latitude, oceanic circulation and altitude.

The climate of the British Isles

Basic climatic characteristics: temperature, precipitation and wind.

Air masses affecting the British Isles.

Origin and nature of depressions. Weather changes associated with the passage of a depression.

Origin and nature of anticyclones. Associated weather conditions in winter and summer.

Storm events: their occurrence, their impact and responses to them. **One** case study from within the last 30 years should be undertaken.

The climate of one tropical region (tropical wet/dry savanna or monsoon or equatorial)

Basic climatic characteristics: temperature, precipitation and wind.

The role of sub-tropical anticyclones and the inter-tropical convergence zone.

Tropical revolving storms. Their occurrence, their impact, management of the hazard and responses to the event. **Two** case studies of recent (within the last 30 years) tropical revolving storms should be undertaken from contrasting areas of the world.

Climate on a local scale: urban climates

Temperatures: the urban heat island effect.

Precipitation: frequency and intensity, fogs, thunderstorms, and their relationship to urban form and processes.

Air quality: particulate pollution, photochemical smog and pollution reduction policies.

Winds: the effects of urban structures and layout on variations in wind speed, direction and frequency.

Global climate change

Evidence for climatic change over the last 20 000 years.

Global warming – possible causes. Possible effects: on a global scale, on the chosen tropical region (above) and on the British Isles.

Responses to global warming: international, national and local.

Option 3: Ecosystems: Change and Challenge

Nature of ecosystems

Structure of ecosystems, energy flows, trophic levels, food chains and food webs.

Ecosystems in the British Isles over time

Succession and climatic climax: illustrated by one of lithosere, psammosere, hydrosere or halosere.

The characteristics of the climatic climax: temperate deciduous woodland biome.

The effects of human activity on succession – illustrated by one plagioclimax such as a heather moorland.

The biome of one tropical region (savanna grassland or tropical monsoon forest or tropical equatorial rainforest)

The main characteristics of the biome.

Ecological responses to the climate and soil moisture budget – adaptations by vegetation and animals.

Human activity and its impact on the biome.

Development issues in the biome to include aspects of biodiversity and the potential for sustainability.

Ecosystem issues on a local scale: impact of human activity

Changes in ecosystems resulting from urbanisation.

Urban niches. Colonisation of wasteland: the development of distinctive ecologies along routeways (e.g. roads and railways). The planned and unplanned introduction of new species and the impact of this on ecosystems.

Changes in the rural/urban fringe.

Ecological conservation areas. **One** case study should be undertaken.

Ecosystem issues on a global scale

The relationships between human activity, biodiversity and sustainability.

The management of fragile environments (conservation versus exploitation): **two** contrasting case studies of recent (within the last 30 years) management schemes in fragile environments should be undertaken.

The Human Options

Option 4: World Cities

The global pattern: millionaire cities, mega cities and world cities.

Economic development and change related to urbanisation.

Contemporary urbanisation processes

Urbanisation: characteristics, causes and effects.

Suburbanisation: characteristics, causes and effects.

Counter-urbanisation: characteristics, causes and effects.

Re-urbanisation: characteristics, causes and effects.

Planning and management issues.

Contrasting case studies within countries at different levels of economic development to demonstrate the above.

Urban decline and regeneration within urban areas

Characteristics and causes of urban decline.

Urban regeneration: gentrification, property-led regeneration schemes, partnership schemes between local and national governments and the private sector.

Retailing and other services

The decentralisation of retailing and other services – causes and impacts.

One case study of an out of town centre retailing area.

The redevelopment of urban centres – impacts and responses, including one case study of an urban centre that has undergone redevelopment.

Contemporary sustainability issues in urban areas

Waste management: recycling and its alternatives.

Transport and its management: the development of integrated, efficient and sustainable systems.

Option 5: Development and Globalisation

Development – economic, demographic, social, political and cultural changes associated with development; the development continuum.

Globalisation – factors and dimensions: flows of capital, labour, products and services; global marketing; patterns of production, distribution and consumption.

Patterns and processes

Newly Industrialised countries (NICs): their initial growth, with particular reference to the "Asian Tiger" economies.

Further growth of NICs, with particular reference to China.

Globalisation of services, with particular reference to India.

Growth in the 21st century – the impact of new markets and new technologies (for example in Brazil, Russia and oil-producing countries).

Countries at very low levels of economic development

Characteristics and issues – quality of life, debt, social problems.

Global social and economic groupings

The concept of the North/South divide, and its relationship to the development continuum.

Reasons for the social and economic groupings of nations, with particular reference to the European Union.

The consequences of the groupings of nations.

Aspects of globalisation

Transnational corporations (TNCs): characteristics and spatial organisation.

Reasons for the growth and the spatial organisation of transnational corporations (TNCs).

Case study of **one** TNC should be undertaken.

Social, economic and environmental impacts of TNCs on their host countries, and their countries of origin.

Development issues within the world (each to be studied with reference to contrasting areas of the world)

"Trade versus aid".

"Economic sustainability versus environmental sustainability".

"Sustainable tourism, myth or reality".

Option 6: Contemporary Conflicts and Challenges

The geographical basis of conflict

Nature and origin of conflict: identity (nationalism, regionalism, localism), ethnicity, culture; resources including territory; ideology.

Patterns of conflict: national, regional, local.

Expression of conflict: non-violent, political activity, debate, terrorism, insurrection, war.

Conflict resolution.

Conflict over the use of a local resource (e.g. land, buildings, space)

The reason for the conflict, and the attitudes of different groups of people to the conflict.

The processes which operate to resolve the conflict.

Recognition that some people benefit, whereas others may lose, when the outcome is decided.

The geographical impact of international conflicts

The social, economic and environmental issues associated with major international conflicts that have taken place within the last 30 years. The examination of one or more case studies. For example, in the early 21st century, this could include an examination of international conflicts such as those in:

- Gaza and the West Bank in the Middle East
- Afghanistan
- the Darfur region of Sudan.

The challenge of multicultural societies in the UK

Reasons for the development of multicultural societies.

The geographical distribution of cultural groupings.

Issues related to multicultural societies.

Separatism within and/or across national boundaries

The nature of separatism.

Reasons for separatism.

Consequences of separatism.

The challenge of global poverty

The global distribution of poverty.

Causes of poverty.

Addressing poverty on a global scale, including the work by international agencies such as the United Nations.

The issue: "No development without security, and no security without development".

3.4 Unit 4A GEO4A Geography Fieldwork Investigation

Introduction

Candidates taking Unit 4A have, in section A, the opportunity to extend an area of the subject content into a more detailed study, whilst, in section B candidates will be assessed on fieldwork skills using stimulus material provided in the examination.

Candidates are required to undertake preparatory investigative work in the field to develop skills associated with planning, collection of primary and, if appropriate, secondary data, presentation, interpretation and evaluation, in order to be able to produce a report of an investigation.

It is expected that classroom-based background study will be necessary to support this investigative work.

Centres should ensure that candidates follow best practice in terms of health and safety procedures and risk assessment in fieldwork.

The Task

For Unit 4A, section A, candidates are required to undertake a personal fieldwork investigation.

The broad generic task is:

> the individual investigation of a geographical argument, assertion, hypothesis, issue or problem.

This allows candidates to scope their own individual task.

There are no restrictions on the type of topic studied, other than it should be geographical and include primary and, where relevant, secondary data collection and should be based on a small area of study and be linked to the content of the specification.

Investigation

Candidates should select a title for their investigation that is manageable and can be fully developed in preparation for the examination. In devising the aim, candidates should select one focused argument, assertion, hypothesis, issue or problem that has both a theoretical and locational context. Appropriate and manageable methods should be used to collect relevant data. The data should permit the use of appropriate cartographical, graphical and statistical skills to enable a full interpretation to be made, which should include reference to the aim. The conclusion should include a summary of the results, the relevance of these to the aim and an evaluation of the overall investigation.

Preparation for this unit will involve enquiry work outside the classroom, for example, data collection/ measurement of features in the field, workplace visit/ experience, internet research and use of library or archive. Pupils may work individually or in groups and teachers should be available for consultation where necessary.

By the end of the investigative work in the field, candidates will be expected to:

- display an understanding of the purpose of the investigation and relevant spatial and conceptual background
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the geographical content, concepts and processes
- plan, construct and carry out sequences of enquiry
- show an awareness of the suitability of the data collected and the methods used
- be aware of the alternatives and evaluate methodology
- use this information in a straightforward way, presenting it in a different or more easily understood form, e.g. graphs, maps
- be familiar with alternative methods of data presentation/processing
- analyse, interpret and evaluate geographical information, issues and viewpoints and apply understanding in unfamiliar contexts
- draw conclusion(s) relating to the specific enquiry, understand their validity, limitations and implications for the study
- demonstrate an awareness of safety issues and risk assessment in geographical fieldwork
- select and use a variety of methods, skills and techniques to investigate questions and issues, reach conclusions and communicate findings
- use and understand their own experience of fieldwork and enquiry.

Preparation for Assessment

Section A

It is essential that all candidates have undertaken an appropriate programme of fieldwork in preparation for this unit.

Candidates should seek advice on the choice of topic from their teachers to ensure that they are able to show what they understand and can do. It is expected that candidates will have the opportunity to investigate the topic in depth, allowing them to show initiative in searching for, collecting, recording and interpreting data. Although group work may provide a useful basis for undertaking and teaching fieldwork exercises, and indeed may be necessary on safety grounds, it should not lead to candidates producing exactly the same answers.

Section B

This section will assess the fieldwork skills. Questions will be set using data, skills and techniques used in fieldwork presentation and analysis to enable candidates to analyse, interpret and evaluate geographical information and apply understanding in unfamiliar contexts.

Assessment

Unit 4A will be assessed in a 1½ hour examination covering the learning outcomes set out above in Preparation for Assessment. Candidates are **not** allowed to take any reference materials of any sort into the examination. The examination will test candidates' knowledge and understanding of the subject matter relating to their investigation and its links with other aspects of geography; their critical approach to the methodology, approaches and techniques associated with data gathering, presentation and analysis; of the findings of the investigation and its contribution to furthering candidates' geographical understanding and that of the role of fieldwork enquiry in geographical study. Candidates will be tested, in addition, on their ability to apply understanding in unfamiliar contexts, using fieldwork stimulus material.

3

3.5 Unit 4B GEO4B Geographical Issue Evaluation

Introduction

Unit 4B is an issue evaluation exercise and, as such, demands the development of the range of geographical skills, knowledge and understanding identified in this specification. Unit 4B allows candidates to extend the content of the specification within the specialised context of issue evaluation.

The Advance Information Booklet GEO4B/PM

The Advance Information Booklet is to be opened and issued to candidates **on or after 1 April** for a June examination, or **on or after 1 November** for a January examination.

Copies of the Advance Information Booklet are sent automatically to those centres that have submitted estimates of entry for this unit for a specific examination series. If your centre fails to submit an estimate of entry form, you will be able to obtain copies of the booklet by contacting the entries department at AQA.

The process of issue evaluation

To enable candidates to address issue evaluation they must:

- interpret a range of data and resources provided for them in the Advance Information Booklet (AIB)
- use techniques to present and analyse data from the AIB
- consider how additional information could be collected using fieldwork, internet research and other methods
- relate the data to the body of geographical knowledge and understanding developed through their AS and A2 studies
- where necessary, carry out further research into the issue or the area referred to in the AIB
- be able to recognise and define an issue
- consider evidence from different points of view
- recognise shortcomings of the data and consider other possible sources through which those shortcomings could be remedied
- establish criteria for evaluation of the issue or for decision-making
- evaluate a range of options concerning the management of an issue or of a decision
- identify and analyse potential areas of conflict
- consider ways of resolving or reducing conflict
- recommend a way of managing the issue or making a decision – and justify their recommendation
- suggest the possible impact of action that could result from their recommendation
- review the process of issue evaluation.

The parties which may be involved in the issue

- International agencies
- National and local government
- Government agencies
- Business interests
- Non-governmental organisations
- Interest and pressure groups
- Individual people.

The economics and politics of the process

The issue analysis could include the role of economic and political factors in determining outcomes. For example, the role that economic factors could play in the management of physical landforms overwhelmed by tourism; the role of political factors in the selection of sites for out of town centre shopping areas or the role of environmental organisations in the development of energy schemes.

The environmental context

Candidates should be encouraged to look at the following in an environmental context:

- the impact of the issues on the environment
- conservation and exploitation; sustainability and growth.

Issue evaluation skills and assessment

The development of the skills referred to in the skills checklist must be taught in the context of the knowledge, skills and understanding of modules studied in the specification. This means that the module may be set in the context of any area of the specification, either in isolation, or combined as and when appropriate.

Assessment will be achieved by means of an issue evaluation exercise located in a particular place or environment which candidates can study, with the AIB available from 1st November or 1st April preceding the examination. It is envisaged that, over time, a variety of scales will be used from local to regional, to national, to international. The context will also be varied from the UK to other countries, thus representing countries in various stages of development. Where the context is drawn from those areas of the AS or A2 specification which are optional, material will be provided in the AIB in such a way as to enable all candidates to be assessed to A Level standard.

Unit 4B will be assessed in a 1½ hour examination covering a selection of the stages set out in the **process of issue evaluation** above.

3.6 Skills Checklist

Candidates will need to develop a variety of basic, investigative, cartographic, graphical, applied ICT and statistical skills. They will need to develop a critical awareness of the appropriateness and limitations of different skills and resources. The level of accuracy, sophistication and detail are all expected to be greater at AS than at GCSE, and similarly between AS and A2.

Candidates will need a basic mathematics set, including a calculator.

Basic Skills

To include:

- annotation of illustrative material, base maps, sketch maps, OS maps, diagrams, graphs, sketches, photographs etc
- use of overlays
- literacy skills.

Investigative Skills

To include:

- identification of aims, geographical questions and issues, and effective approaches to enquiry
- identification, selection and collection of quantitative and qualitative evidence, including the use of appropriate sampling techniques, from primary sources (including fieldwork) and secondary sources.
- processing, presentation, analysis and interpretation of evidence
- drawing conclusions and showing an awareness of the validity of conclusions
- evaluation, including further research opportunities
- risk assessment and identification of strategies for minimising health and safety risks in undertaking fieldwork.

Cartographic Skills

To include at AS use of:

- atlas maps
- base maps
- sketch maps
- Ordnance Survey maps at a variety of scales
- maps with located proportional symbols – squares, circles, semi-circles, bars
- maps showing movement – flow lines, desire lines and trip lines
- choropleth, isoline and dot maps.

In addition, to include at A2:

- weather maps – including synoptic charts
- detailed town centre plans.

Graphical Skills

To include at AS use of:

- line graphs – simple, comparative, compound and divergent
- bar graphs – simple, comparative, compound and divergent
- scatter graphs – and use of best fit line
- pie charts and proportional divided circles
- triangular graphs
- radial diagrams
- logarithmic scales
- dispersion diagrams.

In addition, to include at A2:

- kite diagrams.

ICT Skills

To include:

- use of remotely sensed data – photographs, digital images including those captured by satellite
- use of databases, eg census data, Environment Agency data; meteorological office data
- use of geographical information systems (GIS)
- presentation of text and graphical and cartographic images using ICT.

Statistical Skills

To include at AS:

- measures of central tendency – mean, mode, median
- measures of dispersion – interquartile range and standard deviation
- Spearman's rank correlation test
- application of significance level in inferential statistical results.

In addition, to include at A2:

- comparative tests – Chi-squared, Mann Whitney U Test.

4 Scheme of Assessment

4.1 Aims

AS and A Level specifications in Geography should encourage students to:

- develop and apply their understanding of geographical concepts and processes to understand and interpret our changing world
- develop their awareness of the complexity of interactions within and between societies, economies, cultures and environments at scales from local to global
- develop as global citizens who recognise the challenges of sustainability and the implications for their own and others' lives
- improve as critical and reflective learners aware of the importance of attitudes and values, including their own
- become adept in the use and application of skills and new technologies through their geographical studies both in and outside the classroom
- be inspired by the world around them, and gain enjoyment and satisfaction from their geographical studies and understand their relevance.

Specifications should reflect new ideas and developments about the changing nature of geography in the 21st century and its relevance for everyday life.

AS and A Level specifications in Geography should require students to:

- develop knowledge and understanding of selected physical, human and environmental processes that underpin key geographical concepts
- develop a knowledge and understanding of the key concepts of place, space, diversity, interdependence, people – environment interaction, the processes associated with these, and change over time
- study at a range of scales and understand the importance of scale as a geographical idea
- use a range of skills and techniques, including the use of maps and images at different scales, necessary for geographical study
- carry out research and out-of-classroom work including fieldwork, as appropriate to the topics selected
- use modern information technologies, including geographical information systems, as appropriate to the content.
- develop understanding of the application and relevance of geography.

In addition, for A2 the specification should require students to:

- undertake individual research/investigative work, including fieldwork
- extend their understanding of geographical ideas, concepts and processes
- identify and analyse the connections between the different aspects of geography
- analyse and synthesise geographical information in a variety of forms and from a range of sources
- consider new ideas and developments about the changing nature of geography in the 21st century
- critically reflect on and evaluate the potential and limitations of approaches and methods used both in and outside the classroom.

4.2 Assessment Objectives (AO)

The Assessment Objectives are common to AS and A Level. The assessment units will assess the following Assessment Objectives in the context of the content and skills set out in Section 3 (Subject content).

AO1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the content, concepts and processes.

AO2 Analyse, interpret and evaluate geographical information, issues and viewpoints and apply understanding in unfamiliar contexts.

AO3 Select and use a variety of methods, skills and techniques (including the use of new technologies) to investigate questions and issues, reach conclusions and communicate findings.

Quality of Written Communication (QWC)

In GCE specifications which require candidates to produce written material in English, candidates must:

- ensure that text is legible and that spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurate so that meaning is clear
- select and use a form and style of writing appropriate to purpose and to complex subject matter
- organise information clearly and coherently, using specialist vocabulary when appropriate.

In this specification QWC will be assessed in all units where extended writing is required. Each mark scheme includes an overall assessment of the quality of written communication by embedding the three strands above within the levels marking criteria.

Weighting of Assessment Objectives for AS

The table below shows the approximate weighting of each of the Assessment Objectives in the AS units.

Assessment Objectives	Unit Weightings (%)		Overall weighting of AOs (%)
	Unit 1	Unit 2	
AO1	36.1	3.6	39.7
AO2	28.0	7.2	35.2
AO3	5.8	19.2	25.0
Overall weighting of units (%)	70	30	100

Weighting of Assessment Objectives for A Level

The table below shows the approximate weighting of each of the Assessment Objectives in the AS and A2 units.

Assessment Objectives	Unit Weightings (%)					Overall weighting of AOs (%)
	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4A	Unit 4B	
AO1	18.1	1.8	10	3.3	3.3	33.2
AO2	14.0	3.6	13.3	6.7	6.7	37.6
AO3	2.9	9.6	6.7	10	10	29.2
Overall weighting of units (%)	35	15	30	20	20	100

4.3 National Criteria

This specification complies with the following:

- The Subject Criteria for Geography
- The Code of Practice for GCE
- The GCE AS and A Level Qualification Criteria
- The Arrangements for the Statutory Regulation of External Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland: Common Criteria

4.4 Prior Learning

There are no prior learning requirements.

However, we recommend that candidates should have acquired the skills and knowledge associated with a GCSE course or equivalent. It must be emphasised that this is not a requirement for candidates wishing to study the course offered through this specification. Any requirements are set at the discretion of centres.

4.5 Synoptic Assessment and Stretch and Challenge

Synoptic assessment

The definition of synoptic assessment in the context of geography is as follows.

Synoptic assessment involves assessment of candidates' ability to draw on their understanding of the connections between different aspects of the subject represented in the specification and demonstrate their ability to 'think like a geographer'.

For this specification, synoptic assessment will be included in each of the A2 units. Examples of synoptic assessment are:

- decision-making/problem solving/issues evaluation exercises requiring candidates to draw together relevant knowledge, understanding and skills of the specification, to tackle a decision, problem or issue that is new to them
- an essay question covering geographical issues or problems that would require candidates to draw together and apply relevant integrated knowledge, understanding and skills of the specification
- an essay question exploring key geographical concepts through linkages between physical, human and environmental geography
- an assessment on a particular region or area, which is on a scale which allows candidates to draw together and apply relevant knowledge, understanding and skills of processes or concepts of the specification
- reporting of a fieldwork enquiry which has encompassed a variety of themes and issues.

Stretch and Challenge

Assessments at A2 will provide greater stretch and challenge for all candidates. This includes the use of more open-ended questions which require the responses to be structured by the candidates.

Specifically, this will include:

- use of a variety of stems in questions – for example analyse, evaluate, discuss, compare
- connectivity between sections of questions
- extended writing
- use of a wider range of question types to address different skills – for example open-ended questions, use of case studies.

4.6 Access to Assessment for Disabled Students

AS/A Levels often require assessment of a broader range of competences. This is because they are general qualifications and, as such, prepare candidates for a wide range of occupations and higher level courses.

The revised AS/A Level qualification and subject criteria were reviewed to identify whether any of the competences required by the subject presented a potential barrier to any disabled candidates. If this was the case, the situation was reviewed again to ensure that such competences were included only where essential to the subject. The findings of this process were discussed with disability groups and with disabled people.

Reasonable adjustments are made for disabled candidates in order to enable them to access the assessments. For this reason, very few candidates will have a complete barrier to any part of the assessment.

Candidates who are still unable to access a significant part of the assessment, even after exploring all possibilities through reasonable adjustments, may still be able to receive an award. They would be given a grade on the parts of the assessment they have taken and there would be an indication on their certificate that not all the competences had been addressed.

Requirements for fieldwork are sufficiently flexible for all candidates to participate.

Candidates with visual impairments may have difficulty in demoinstrating skills related to analysis, interpretation and evaluation of geographical information including maps, 3-D and colour images.

This will be kept under review and may be amended in the future.

5 Administration

5.1 Availability of Assessment Units and Certification

Examinations and certification for this specification are available as follows:

	Availability of units		Availability of certification	
	AS	A2	AS	A Level
January 2009	Unit 2 only			
June 2009	✔		✔	
January 2010	✔	Units 4A and 4B only	✔	
June 2010	✔	✔	✔	✔
January 2011 onwards	✔	✔	✔	✔
June 2011 onwards	✔	✔	✔	✔

5.2 Entries

Please refer to the current version of *Entry Procedures and Codes* for up-to-date entry procedures. You should use the following entry codes for the units and for certification.

Unit 1 – GEOG1
Unit 2 – GEOG2
Unit 3 – GEOG3
Unit 4A – GEO4A
Unit 4B – GEO4B

AS certification – 1031
A Level certification – 2031

5.3 Private Candidates

This specification is available to private candidates. Private candidates should write to AQA for a copy of *Supplementary Guidance for Private Candidates.*

5.4 Access Arrangements and Special Consideration

We have taken note of equality and discrimination legislation and the interests of minority groups in developing and administering this specification.

We follow the guidelines in the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) document: *Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration: General and Vocational Qualifications.* This is published on the JCQ website (**http://www.jcq.org.uk**) or you can follow the link from our website (**http://www.aqa.org.uk**).

Access Arrangements

We can make arrangements so that candidates with disabilities can access the assessment. These arrangements must be made **before** the examination. For example, we can produce a Braille paper for a candidate with a visual impairment.

Special Consideration

We can give special consideration to candidates who have had a temporary illness, injury or indisposition at the time of the examination. Where we do this, it is given **after** the examination.

Applications for access arrangements and special consideration should be submitted to AQA by the Examinations Officer at the centre.

5.5 Language of Examinations

We will provide units in English only.

5.6 Qualification Titles

Qualifications based on this specification are:

- AQA Advanced Subsidiary GCE in Geography, and
- AQA Advanced Level GCE in Geography.

5.7 Awarding Grades and Reporting Results

The AS qualification will be graded on a five-point scale: A, B, C, D and E. The full A Level qualification will be graded on a six-point scale: A*, A, B, C, D and E. To be awarded an A*, candidates will need to achieve a grade A on the full A Level qualification and an A* on the aggregate of the A2 units.

AS and A Level candidates who fail to reach the minimum standard for grade E will be recorded as U (unclassified) and will not receive a qualification certificate. Individual assessment unit results will be certificated.

5.8 Re-sits and shelf-life of unit results

Unit results remain available to count towards certification, whether or not they have already been used, as long as the specification is still valid.

Candidates may re-sit a unit any number of times within the shelf-life of the specification. The best result for each unit will count towards the final qualification. Candidates who wish to repeat a qualification may do so by re-taking one or more units. The appropriate subject award entry, as well as the unit entry/entries, must be submitted in order to be awarded a new subject grade.

Candidates will be graded on the basis of the work submitted for assessment.

Appendices

A Performance Descriptions

These performance descriptions show the level of attainment characteristic of the grade boundaries at A Level. They give a general indication of the required learning outcomes at the A/B and E/U boundaries at AS and A2. The descriptions should be interpreted in relation to the content outlined in the specification; they are not designed to define that content.

The grade awarded will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the Assessment Objectives (see Section 4) overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the examination may be balanced by better performances in others.

AS Performance Descriptions for Geography

	Assessment Objective 1	Assessment Objective 2	Assessment Objective 3
Assessment Objectives	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the content, concepts and processes.	Analyse, interpret and evaluate geographical information, issues and viewpoints and apply understanding in unfamiliar contexts.	Select and use a variety of methods, skills and techniques (including the use of new technologies) to investigate questions and issues, reach conclusions and communicate findings.
A/B boundary performance descriptions	Candidates characteristically: a) demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of a range of concepts and processes b) demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of subject-specific material.	Candidates characteristically: a) analyse and interpret geographical information, issues and viewpoints b) offer a valid evaluation of geographical information, issues and viewpoints c) demonstrate the ability to apply geographical understanding to unfamiliar contexts at different scales.	Candidates characteristically: a) select and use appropriately a range of methods, skills and techniques (including new technologies) when investigating questions and issues b) reach valid conclusions and communicate findings clearly in a structured manner appropriate to the task.
E/U boundary performance descriptions	Candidates characteristically: a) demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of some concepts and processes b) show basic knowledge and understanding of subject-specific material.	Candidates characteristically: a) offer limited and inconsistent analysis and interpretation of geographical information, issues and viewpoints b) attempt some limited evaluation of geographical information, issues and viewpoints c) show some limited ability to apply aspects of geographical understanding to unfamiliar contexts.	Candidates characteristically: a) use a limited range of methods, skills and techniques (which may include new technologies) to attempt to investigate questions and issues b) draw some limited conclusions c) communicate findings which broadly address the tasks.

A2 Performance Descriptions for Geography

	Assessment Objective 1	Assessment Objective 2	Assessment Objective 3
Assessment Objectives	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the content, concepts and processes.	Analyse, interpret and evaluate geographical information, issues and viewpoints and apply understanding in unfamiliar contexts.	Select and use a variety of methods, skills and techniques (including the use of new technologies) to investigate questions and issues, reach conclusions and communicate findings.
A/B boundary performance descriptions	Candidates characteristically: a) demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a wide range of concepts and processes b) show thorough knowledge and understanding of subject-specific material.	Candidates characteristically: a) accurately and competently analyse and interpret geographical information, issues and viewpoints b) offer a thorough evaluation of geographical information, issues and viewpoints in relation to specific geographical concepts c) demonstrate the ability to apply accurate and appropriate geographical understanding to unfamiliar contexts with precision at a range of scales.	Candidates characteristically: a) select and use appropriately and accurately a wide range of methods, skills and techniques (including new technologies) when thoroughly investigating questions and issues b) reach substantiated and valid conclusions c) communicate findings accurately and appropriately to the task.
E/U boundary performance descriptions	Candidates characteristically: a) demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of the main concepts and processes b) show some understanding of subject-specific material.	Candidates characteristically: a) show some attempts to analyse and interpret geographical information, issues and viewpoints with varying degrees of success b) offer some evaluation of geographical information, issues and viewpoints with variable success c) show some ability to apply geographical understanding to unfamiliar contexts with some degree of accuracy.	Candidates characteristically: a) use a range of methods, skills and techniques (which include new technologies) to investigate questions and issues with varying degrees of success b) draw some straightforward conclusions c) communicate findings broadly appropriate to the task

A

B Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social and other Issues

The study of a course based on geography can contribute to a candidate's understanding of a range of spiritual, moral, ethical, social, cultural and other issues to help clarify and develop a candidate's own values and attitudes in relation to geographical issues. For example, through the study of Unit 3: Contemporary Geographical Issues, an appreciation of a range of moral, ethical, social and cultural issues can be engendered.

Candidates have the opportunity to study multi-cultural societies and sustainable development. This is especially relevant in the development of fragile environments such as Antarctica and the struggle for survival in the Sahel. Cultural geography can be studied in depth in the section on contemporary conflicts and challenges.

In Unit 2: Geographical Skills and Unit 4A: Geography Fieldwork Investigation, candidates have the opportunity to undertake risk assessment in accordance with health and safety considerations.

European Dimension

AQA has taken account of the 1988 Resolution of the Council of the European Community in preparing this specification and associated specimen units.

Environmental Education

AQA has taken account of the 1988 Resolution of the Council of the European Community and the Report "Environmental Responsibility: An Agenda for Further and Higher Education" 1993 in preparing this specification and associated specimen units.

Avoidance of Bias

AQA has taken great care in the preparation of this specification and specimen units to avoid bias of any kind.

C Overlaps with other Qualifications

GCE Environmental Studies

There is some overlap of content in Units 1 and 3 with aspects of the AQA AS/A Level GCE in Environmental Studies.

Areas of overlap include:

- changes in ecosystems, land resources and conservation (ENVS1)
- global climate change, the hydrological cycle and water as a resource (ENVS2)
- energy and pollution (ENVS3)
- human population, food production, deforestation and sustainability (ENVS4).

However, the approach to these topics in the GCE Environmental Studies specification may be quite different to that taken in GCE Geography. The geography specification places particular emphasis on the interactions between people and the environment. Overlap between these two specifications is considered complementary.

D Key Skills – Teaching, Developing and Providing Opportunities for Generating Evidence

Introduction

The Key Skills Qualification requires candidates to demonstrate levels of achievement in the Key Skills of Communication, Application of Number and Information Technology.

The units for the 'wider' Key Skills of Improving own Learning and Performance, Working with Others and Problem Solving are also available. The acquisition and demonstration of ability in these 'wider' Key Skills is deemed highly desirable for all candidates, but they do not form part of the Key Skills Qualification.

The units for each Key Skill comprise three sections:

- What you need to know
- What you must do
- Guidance.

Candidates following a course of study based on this specification for Geography can be offered opportunities to develop and generate evidence of attainment in aspects of the Key Skills of:

- Communication
- Application of Number
- Information Technology
- Working with Others
- Improving own Learning and Performance
- Problem Solving.

Areas of study and learning that can be used to encourage the acquisition and use of Key Skills, and to provide opportunities to generate evidence for Part B of the units, are signposted on the next page.

The above information is given in the context of the knowledge that Key Skills at level 3 will be available until 2010 with last certification in 2012.

Key Skills Qualifications of Communication, Application of Number and Information and Communication Technology will be phased out and replaced by Functional Skills qualifications in English, Mathematics and ICT from September 2010 onwards. For further information see the AQA website: **http://web.aqa.org.uk/qual/keyskills/com04.php**

Key Skills opportunities in Geography

	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4A	Unit 4B
Communication					
C3.1a	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
C3.1b	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
C3.2	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
C3.3	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Application of Number					
N3.1	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
N3.2	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
N3.3	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Information Technology					
ICT3.1	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
ICT3.2	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
ICT3.3	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Working with Others					
WO3.1	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
WO3.2	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
WO3.3	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Improving own Learning and Performance					
LP3.1	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
LP3.2	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
LP3.3	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Problem Solving					
PS3.1				✔	✔
PS3.2				✔	✔
PS3.3				✔	✔

GCE Geography (2030) 2011 onwards

Qualification Accreditation Number: AS 500/2594/6 - A Level 500/2592/2

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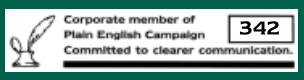
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