

KS5 Geography Curriculum Overview:

1. Why have we chosen OCR A Level Geography?

The course is structured through enquiry questions within the topics which allows learners to be engaged in the subject matter and understand how the content is relevant to them. This structure also mirrors our GCSE OCR B specification. Therefore, we thought it only made sense to have an A level structure that students are familiar with from GCSE. The use of an enquiry approach also ensures learners are discovering something about the nature of geographical knowledge and how the scope of the subject is changed by the questions which are asked. We also liked how the enquiry question is sequenced in an order that was logical which allowed us to plan lessons through the specific sequenced spec points. For example, the spec points for Global Migration start with learning content such as knowing the different types of migration with a move towards learning about specific locational case studies centered around those different types of migration. This is logical and is reflective in our planning. Finally, the interconnections between topics and papers is something students are well aware of from their time at KS3 and KS4. The specialised concepts in this A level course (Eg. threshold, risk, resilience, sustainability, inequality and so on) have been mapped backwards all the way down to year 7 which is why this A level OCR course is perfect to build upon the foundations laid in KS3 and KS4 (see curriculum maps for these to get an idea.

2. Course structure and how will students be assessed in their A-Level exams?

Content Overview	Assessment Overview	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscape Systems Earth's Life Support Systems Geographical Skills 	Physical systems (01) 66 marks 1 hour 30 minute written paper	22% of total A Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changing Spaces; Making Places Global Connections Geographical Skills 	Human interactions (02) 66 marks 1 hour 30 minute written paper	22% of total A Level
Optionality – study 2 of 5 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate Change Disease Dilemmas Exploring Oceans Future of Food Hazardous Earth Geographical Skills 	Geographical debates (03)* 108 marks 2 hours 30 minute written paper	36% of total A Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independent Investigation 	Investigative geography (04/05)* 60 marks Non-examination assessment (NEA)	20% of total A Level

*Indicates inclusion of synoptic assessment.

Year 12 and 13 (year plan)

Topic name	When we teach the topic?
Teacher 1: Paper 2 (Global Connections: Migration)	Year 12 (Term 1 – first half)
Teacher 1: Paper 2 (Global Connections: Human Rights)	Year 12 (Term 1 – second half)
Teacher 2: Paper 2 (Changing Spaces, Making Places)	Year 12 (Term 1 – whole term)
NEA – Planning/Completing	Year 12 (Term 2 – whole term)
NEA – Planning/Completing	Year 12 (Term 3 – first half)
Teacher 1 and 2: Paper 3 (Future of Food)	Year 12 (Term 3 – second half)
Teacher 1 and 2: Paper 3 (Disease Dilemmas)	Year 13 (Term 1 – first half)
Teacher 1 and 2: Paper 1 (Earth Life Support System)	Year 13 (Term 1 – second half)
Teacher 1 and 2: Paper 1 (Coastal Landscapes)	Year 13 (Term 2 – first half)
Teacher 1 and 2: Paper 1,2 and 3	Year 13 (Term 2/3: Revision)

3. How do we justify the order of our A-Level teaching plans?

Due to department dynamics (stronger leaning towards human geography at this moment in time), we have opted to start off with teaching the entirety of paper 2 with the two allocated teachers that each year 12 class have. Therefore, this has meant that paper 2 is wrapped up very quickly and efficiently. Students have also in the past found the concepts and theories easier in human geography. This has allowed for a smooth and manageable start to A-Level geography for our students. We then decided on starting and finishing off the NEA instead of historically starting it towards the end of year 12 and students completing it over summer and then having the first term of year 13 to finalise. This caused a lot of issues as there were many students that didn't do much over summer and found the spill over of the NEA difficult to manage over two academic years. Through reflection, we decided that we could completely cover and finish the NEA by May of the year 12 academic year by starting far earlier in year 12. After completing the NEA, we decided on starting paper 3 content (first topic – future of food) as it had more manageable content in terms of understanding. It was very similar to human geography content and the manageable aspect of this was important as fatigue usually kicks in after this period with mock season etc. This is what wraps up year 12 teaching/plan. Moving forward, into year 13, we decided that we will finish the second topic of paper 3 (disease dilemmas). In doing so, by October half term, we would have completed the whole of paper 2 and 3 along with the NEA. We believe this puts students in a very good position before starting paper 1. Paper 1 has been historically very challenging in terms of student understanding of key concepts/processes. Therefore, we felt that students would benefit massively knowing that this is the last bit of content for their A-Level course.

4. Year 12 and Year 13 Topic outlines with justifications.

Topic name	Essential knowledge/concepts	Assessment
Paper 2 – Global Connections (Migration)	<p>Knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This topic allows learners to explore the processes and flows that occur at the global level, and the ways in which these influence people, places and institutions. Through two overarching themes of global systems and global governance learners will investigate how these shape relationships between citizens, states and organisations around the world. • Global systems, including those that regulate and order trade, financial transactions and migration, create interdependencies, which produce uneven geographies of winners and losers. States and non-state organisations respond to these flows and global systems, which can sometimes act to promote stability, growth and development, but which can also be the cause of inequalities, conflicts and injustice. • Through case studies learners will build up a picture of how the world around them is shaped, the complexities associated with this and the resulting issues for people. Study will include the use of both quantitative and qualitative approaches across the global systems and global governance themes as a whole. • Study must enable learners to gain an understanding of the way in which global systems and global governance underlie their own and other people's lives across the globe. This understanding will vary 	See Assessment Plan for more information

	<p>depending on the situation and circumstance of the learner; fieldwork and research is encouraged where possible in support of this.</p> <p>Specialised Concepts: Sustainability, spatial, temporal, identity, representation, globalisation, causality and inequality.</p>	
Paper 2 – Global Connections (Human Rights)	<p>Knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same knowledge/theories as above because it is a topic that oversees two interconnecting themes (migration which is topic A and human rights which is topic B) <p>Specialised Concepts: inequality, identity, representation, causality, sustainability, spatial and temporal scales.</p>	See Assessment Plan for more information
Paper 2 – Changing Spaces, Making Places	<p>Knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Places are connected to other places and there are few left untouched by the forces of globalisation. Changing Spaces; Making Places allows learners to look through a local lens to understand global issues. • Starting from the local place in which learners live and moving outwards to the regional, national and global scale in order to understand the interconnections and dynamics of place. • Investigating how shifting flows of people, money and resources are shaping places, whilst economic changes are contributing to a landscape of haves and have nots. • Exploration of the relationships and connections between people, the economy, and society and how these contribute to creating places. Placemaking projects are explored, considering the meanings and representations created and attached to places. Placemaking projects can happen at a variety of levels from individual project, street level, cultural quarter or whole city level. <p>Specialised Concepts: Sustainability, spatial, temporal, identity, representation, globalisation, causality and inequality.</p>	See Assessment Plan for more information
NEA – Independent Investigation	<p>Knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigative geography (04/05) gives learners the opportunity to undertake an independent investigation which is of particular interest to them, which can be related to any area of the specification. • An independent investigation in A Level Geography provides learners with the opportunity to develop a wide range of skills and abilities which are applicable not only to study in Higher Education but also within the world of work and life, which, amongst others, include: • the structure and enquiry process 	See Assessment Plan for more information

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extended writing • innovation in investigating and presenting data • self-directed study • research techniques • making synoptic links between the real world, geographical theory, the learners own research and the specification. <p>Specialised Concepts: Sustainability, spatial, temporal, identity, representation, globalisation, causality and inequality, causality, systems, feedback, interdependence, mitigation, adaptation, risk, resilience, threshold (depends on what your NEA theme will be).</p>	
Paper 3 – Future of Food	<p>Knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food is both a celebrated and contested issue. It is predicted that 805 million people go to bed hungry each night, while others consume and waste far more than their fair share. • Across the planet food security varies both within and between countries at all levels of the development spectrum. • This topic explores the spatial patterns and complex causes of food security, from the physical influences on food systems and how humans create and exacerbate food security issues. • Learners will investigate the impacts of food systems on people and the environment before considering management strategies at a range of scales, including an in-depth case study of one country’s efforts to improve food security. <p>Specialised Concepts: Sustainability, spatial, temporal, identity, representation, globalisation, causality and inequality, causality, systems, feedback, interdependence, mitigation, adaptation, risk, resilience and threshold.</p>	See Assessment Plan for more information
Paper 3 – Disease Dilemmas	<p>Knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diseases do not discriminate who becomes infected or develops symptoms. Diseases can be communicable and noncommunicable and a number of physical and human factors affect an individual’s and a community’s susceptibility to the risk. • The global nature of some diseases in terms of their geographical spread and scale has encouraged international efforts to combat them. • The causes of disease are often complex and the impacts even more so especially when dealing with these at epidemic and pandemic levels. • Continued research into diseases and developments in pharmaceuticals and ‘our’ understanding of diseases offers opportunities to combat diseases, however unequal access to drugs and information has implications for communities and countries. 	See Assessment Plan for more information

	<p><u>Specialised Concepts:</u> Sustainability, spatial, temporal, identity, representation, globalisation, causality and inequality, causality, systems, feedback, interdependence, mitigation, adaptation, risk, resilience and threshold</p>	
<p>Paper 1 – Earth’s Life Support Systems</p>	<p><u>Knowledge:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water and carbon support life on Earth, utilised by flora, fauna and humans. 71% of the Earth’s surface is covered in water however 68% of the freshwater is locked in ice and glaciers. • Water is moved and stored beneath our feet and this 30% is critically important to life on Earth. • Water and carbon are cycled between the land, oceans and atmosphere in open and closed systems, the processes within these cycles are inter-related. • Forests, soils, oceans and the atmosphere all store carbon and yet they are threatened and altered by human activity, this will be examined in detail through the Tropical Rainforest and the Arctic tundra case studies as well as at a global scale. • Physical changes in these cycles occur over time, from seconds to millions of years, and these changes can be seen at a range of scales, from individual plants or trees to vast ecosystems. • With research and monitoring it is clear there is an increased need for global and national solutions to protect ‘Earth’s life support systems’. <p><u>Specialised Concepts:</u> Sustainability, spatial, temporal, identity, representation, globalisation, causality and inequality, causality, systems, feedback, interdependence, mitigation, adaptation, risk, resilience, threshold</p>	<p>See Assessment Plan for more information</p>
<p>Paper 1 – Coastal Landscapes</p>	<p><u>Knowledge:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This topic introduces learners to the integrated study of Earth surface processes, landforms and resultant landscapes within the conceptual framework of a systems approach. • An understanding of Earth surface processes, together with their associated transfers of energy and movements of materials underpins the landscape systems topic. • Learners will explore how the landscape can be viewed as system, how landforms developed within their chosen landscape and the influences of both climate and human activity on this. <p><u>Specialised Concepts:</u> Sustainability, spatial, temporal, identity, representation, globalisation, causality and inequality, causality, systems, feedback, interdependence, mitigation, adaptation, risk, resilience, threshold</p>	<p>See Assessment Plan for more information</p>