



GEOGRAPHY IGCSE

Course overview

Syllabus: CIE IGCSE geography

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The Cambridge IGCSE (9-1) course for Geography is incredibly diverse and exciting and revolves around the study of 13 key physical, human and environmental geography topics over a 3-year course begun in Year 9 (Year 3) and finishing with three written exams at the end of Year 11 (Year 5).

You can see in the table below exactly what we study and in which year we study each topic. Politics, economics, sociology and earth sciences feature heavily in our course making it very varied and very versatile as the addition of a third section on economic geography makes it an especially diverse course.

Embedded in each of these topics is the development of key geographical and analytical skills with an emphasis on identifying key geographic patterns and successfully interpreting geographical data such as graphs, diagrams, photographs, satellite images, maps etc. You can see a full list of the skills covered at the end of this document.

All of our topics cover contemporary geographical issues and feature regularly in the news. We are always linking our studies back to current affairs and real-time news articles e.g. migration post-BREXIT, recent natural disasters, the decline of the British steel industry and rise of the quaternary sector, water shortage in the Sahel, enhanced global warming etc. Watching the news regularly and keeping up with current affairs is important in order to get the most out of the IGCSE.

FIELD TRIP:

Please note that an essential 2 or 3 day field trip is undertaken at the end of Year 10 at an approximate cost of between £75-£150 depending on numbers (total cost). Field studies are critical to geography and are typical of all geography GCSE and A-Level courses. For this IGCSE, the field trip is a vital contribution to the Paper 4 exam which constitutes 27.5% of the IGCSE. All students wishing to study IGCSE Geography are required to attend.

Iceland 2024 Geography Trip

Students may wish to attend the Iceland Geography trip in October 2024 but this trip is entirely optional and is by no means a requirement of the IGCSE course. Details about the Iceland trip and how to sign up

will be shared in September 2023. Please note, the Iceland trip is offered in addition to, and not instead of, the Year 10 field trip. The Year 10 field trip is still a requirement of the IGCSE.

Syllabus Overview

TOPIC STUDIED	Year studied
THEME 1: Settlement and Population (Human Geography) • Population: population structure, distribution, natural population growth and decline, overpopulation, underpopulation and ageing populations and population management policies including Japan's pro-natal policies and China's one/ two child policy. Migration patterns and causes and migration challenges. • Settlement: the study of rural settlement patterns and distribution, urbanisation in MEDCs and LEDCs and the associated human and environmental issues this process creates, urban structure in MEDCs and LEDCs and squatter settlements.	Year 9 Year 10
THEME 2: The Natural Environment (Physical Geography) • Earthquakes and volcanoes: the structure of the earth, plate tectonics, plate boundaries, the formation, type, impact and responses to both volcanoes and earthquakes. • Rivers: key river processes and the formation of river landforms at the upper, middle, lower courses. The opportunities of rivers worldwide. Causes of flooding and methods of management. • Coasts: key marine processes and the formation of erosive and depositional marine landforms including mangroves and coral reefs. The opportunities of coastal areas worldwide. Causes of coastal recession and methods of management. Tropical storms. • Weather: different types of weather, how weather systems are formed and measured. The relationship between weather and climate. • Climate & natural vegetation: how world biomes are formed and distributed globally. The global and local factors that influence climate and biome formation. In depth study of tropical desert and equatorial rainforest biomes and the vulnerability of these biomes to deforestation and over-exploitation. Sustainable management solutions.	Year 11 Year 10 Year 10 Year 9 Year 11
THEME 3: Economic Development • Food production: location and methods of commercial and subsistence farming worldwide, impact of farming on the natural environment, causes of global and local food shortage, solutions to food shortage. • Industry: how and where people are employed worldwide, different types of industry, employment structure, the relationship between industrial change and economic development, the location of industries, high technology industry and the quaternary sector. The environmental impact of industry.	Year 10 Year 9

• Tourism: reasons for the growth of tourism, types of tourism, advantages and disadvantages of tourism, the environmental impact and management of tourism worldwide.	Year 9
• Energy: reasons for and the scale of growing energy demand worldwide, renewable and non-renewable energy and nuclear energy, solutions to meet the growing demand, location of energy sources, energy supply in Iceland.	Year 11
• Water: water supply and quality worldwide, reasons for and the scale of growing water demand worldwide, causes of water shortage and water pollution, sustainable management solutions to water issues.	Year 11
• Environmental risks of economic development: conclusion to the course. What combined impact do human activities from population growth and urbanisation through to coastal and river usage and the rise of farming, tourism and industry have on the natural environment. A look at enhanced global warming and pollution world wide. What solutions can be, and have been, tried to protect and preserve our planet for future generations.	Year 11

FAQs

Why the IGCSE and not the GCSE?

The IGCSE has the same value as the GCSE. However, it can prove a more internationally recognised qualification than the British GCSE. This is a bonus but not the main reason for choosing the course. The two main reasons why we teach this course are:

- 1) It is the original and best! The new geography GCSE introduced in 2018 (as offered by other exam boards such as AQA, EdExcel, OCR etc.) was a complete overhaul of the old geography GCSEs. The new GCSE is actually modelled on the current CIE IGCSE syllabus. This means that CIE has a wealth of experience and resources that we can tap into, that other exam boards have yet to establish. In addition, as the exam is sat in three different time zones, three times a year, we have an extensive arrange of past papers and resources we can tap into.
- 2) The IGCSE, studied by students in 192 countries around the world, is necessarily outward-looking, global in focus and includes geographical issues and case studies that are truly international and less restricted to the British Isles than other UK courses. This makes it quintessentially more geographical in focus and also enables us to choose our own case studies and draw on some of the diverse experiences and connections of our students themselves.

What about Spelling and Grammar (SPaG)?

As the focus in this syllabus is international and it is a course often studied by students for whom English is not their first language, **zero marks** are deducted or awarded on the grounds of spelling and grammar. Instead students are assessed on their knowledge and understanding of key political, social, economic and environmental processes and their ability to extract key information from topical data. However, as always, students should try to write and spell as carefully as possible and they are expected to memorise and use a very large vocabulary of geographical key terms.

Is Geography easier than History? Can students do both?

No! Geography is neither easier nor harder than History. The two subjects are equally challenging and rewarding in their separate fields. The IGCSE in Geography has more content to learn but fewer essays/ extended writing, while History tends to have a deeper focus but with more extended writing. There is some overlap in terms of investigative approach and the two subjects are complementary while still being very different. Studying both History and Geography is both possible and encouraged at The Cedars for those students who are especially interested in the Humanities.

How is it assessed?

Assessment in IGCSE Geography takes the form of 3 end of course written exams sat at the end of Year 11. **Please note Paper 3 is not sat by our students.** This is the coursework option which we do not currently undertake as historically our students perform better in the exam. **Schools opt for either Paper 3 or Paper 4.**

PAPER 1 (MAIN PAPER) GEOGRAPHICAL THEMES	PAPER 2: SKILLS PAPER	PAPER 4: COURSEWORK EXAM
<u>45%</u> of IGCSE	<u>27.5%</u> of IGCSE	<u>27.5%</u> of IGCSE
1 hour 45 mins	1 hour 30 mins	1 hour 30 mins
This paper consists of 6 questions on any 2 topics from each of the themes listed in the table above. We will study all of these topics during our course but students will only be examined <u>in depth</u> on 3 of them Students only need to answer 1 question from each theme (3 questions in total)	This paper is focused on data interpretation and consists of: - A map skills question (20 marks) based on an analysis of an OS map extract - 5 short-answer questions using data about any of the Paper 1 topics from any of the 3 themes Answer all questions	This paper asks students to explain how we carry out field investigations including planning, creating a hypothesis, methodology, data collection, data representation and interpretation and evaluation. It is based on the Year 10 3-day field trip It consists of 2 questions looking at 1) a human geography investigation e.g. coasts or rivers 2) a physical geography investigation e.g. settlement or tourism Answer both questions

Each topic is accompanied by one or more in-depth case study(ies) taken from locations across the globe, within the UK and around our local area/ London.

GEOGRAPHICAL SKILLS STUDIED DURING THE COURSE

1) INTERPRETATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL DATA This skill is embedded in all 3 exam papers.

Data includes: maps, diagrams, graphs, data tables, written material and photographs

- Population pyramid & makeup of population
- Population / transport/ settlement patterns on maps
- Graphs, diagrams/ data tables, written data

- Pictograms, line graphs, bar graphs, kite diagrams, histograms, divided bar graphs, pie graphs, triangular graphs, wind rose graphs, flow diagrams, dispersion graphs, isoline maps, scatter graphs, radial graphs
- Plot data on graphs
- Describe and analyse features and trends from data
- suggest appropriate form of geographical presentation for data
- PHOTOGRAPHICAL to describe human and physical landscapes. Can include: field sketches, photographs, aerial photographs, satellite images, GIS, Cartoon

2) FIELDWORK largely undertaken during the field trip in Year 10 and revised in Year 11 this includes:

- Methods of data collection
- Writing a hypothesis
- Health and safety and risk assessments
- Data accuracy and reliability
- Sampling methods
- Data representation methods
- Data analysis
- Proving or disproving a hypothesis using our findings
- Evaluation of field work

3) MAP SKILLS a relatively small part of the overall IGCSE, nevertheless an analysis of a map extract makes up 33% of the Paper 2 exam. Skills include:

- Four and six figure grid references
- Direction: 16 point compass
- bearings
- measure horizontal distances, curved and straight
- contour readings and differences in height
- cross sections of maps
- map keys and symbols
- scale: measure size and shape in real terms
- basic landscape features e.g. valleys & appropriate geographical terms e.g. escarpment etc.
- topography
- drainage
- relief
- physical features of coastlines, river channels
- settlement patterns
- functions and services of settlements
- urban morphology
- communication networks (human and physical features)

