

International A' Level Geography Specification

Cambridge International Examinations - CIE



Overview

The Geography syllabus builds upon skills gained at GCSE (or equivalent) level study. Learners widen their knowledge and understanding of the subject, while developing their investigative abilities and their evaluation and decision-making skills.

The syllabus is wide-ranging and comprises a variety of options. For example, learners can study topics such as hydrology and fluvial geomorphology, atmosphere and weather, rocks and weathering, population change and settlement dynamics.

The syllabus considers a range of environments, from tropical to arid, and learners can also study subjects such as environmental management, global interdependence and economic transition.

Assessment

For Cambridge International AS and A Level Geography, candidates:

- take Papers 1 and 2 only (for the Cambridge International AS Level qualification)
- or
- follow a staged assessment route by taking Papers 1 and 2 (for the Cambridge International AS Level qualification) in one series, then Paper 3 and 4 (for the Cambridge International A Level qualification) in a later series
- or
- take Papers 1, 2, 3 and 4 in the same examination series, leading to the full Cambridge International A Level.

All components will be externally assessed.

Component	Weighting	
	AS Level	A Level
<p>Paper 1: Core Physical Geography</p> <p>1 hour 30 minutes</p> <p>Section A: Three data response questions (30 marks)</p> <p>Section B: One structured question from a choice of three (30 marks)</p> <p>60 marks</p>	50%	25%
<p>Paper 2: Core Human Geography</p> <p>1 hour 30 minutes</p> <p>Section A: Three data response questions (30 marks)</p> <p>Section B: One structured question from a choice of three (30 marks)</p> <p>60 marks</p>	50%	25%
<p>Paper 3: Advanced Physical Geography Options</p> <p>1 hour 30 minutes</p> <p>Candidates answer questions on two of the optional topics.</p> <p>Each topic consists of one structured question (10 marks) and a choice of essay questions (20 marks).</p> <p>60 marks</p>	-	25%
<p>Paper 4: Advanced Human Geography Options</p> <p>1 hour 30 minutes</p> <p>Candidates answer questions on two of the optional topics.</p> <p>Each topic consists of one structured question (10 marks) and a choice of essay questions (20 marks).</p> <p>60 marks</p>	-	25%

Content Overview

AS Level Syllabus Content

Paper 1: Core Physical Geography

Section 1 | Hydrology and fluvial geomorphology

- 1.1 The drainage basin system
- 1.2 Discharge relationships within drainage basins
- 1.3 River channel processes and landforms
- 1.4 The human impact

Section 2 | Atmosphere and weather

- 2.1 Diurnal energy budgets
- 2.2 The global energy budget
- 2.3 Weather processes and phenomena
- 2.4 The human impact

Section 3 | Rocks and weathering

- 3.1 Plate tectonics
- 3.2 Weathering
- 3.3 Slope processes
- 3.4 The human impact

Paper 2: Core Human Geography

Section 4 | Population

- 4.1 Natural increase as a component of population change
- 4.2 Demographic transition
- 4.3 Population–resource relationships
- 4.4 The management of natural increase

Section 5 | Migration

- 5.1 Migration as a component of population change
- 5.2 Internal migration (within a country)
- 5.3 International migration
- 5.4 The management of international migration

Section 6 | Settlement dynamics

- 6.1 Changes in rural settlements
- 6.2 Urban trends and issues of urbanisation
- 6.3 The changing structure of urban settlements
- 6.4 The management of urban settlements

A2 Level Syllabus Content

Paper 3: Advanced Physical Geography Options

Section 7 | Tropical environments

- 7.1 Tropical climates
- 7.2 Landforms of tropical environments
- 7.3 Humid tropical (rainforest) ecosystems and seasonally humid tropical (savanna) ecosystems
- 7.4 Sustainable management of tropical environments

Section 8 | Coastal environments

- 8.1 Coastal processes
- 8.2 Characteristics and formation of coastal landforms
- 8.3 Coral reefs
- 8.4 Sustainable management of coasts

Section 9 | Hazardous environments

- 9.1 Hazards resulting from tectonic processes
- 9.2 Hazards resulting from mass movements
- 9.3 Hazards resulting from atmospheric disturbances
- 9.4 Sustainable management in hazardous environments

Section 10 | Hot arid and semi-arid environments

- 10.1 Hot arid and semi-arid climates
- 10.2 Landforms of hot arid and semi-arid environments
- 10.3 Soils and vegetation
- 10.4 Sustainable management of hot arid and semi-arid environments

Paper 4: Advanced Human Geography Options

Section 11 | Production, location and change

- 11.1 Agricultural systems and food production
- 11.2 The management of agricultural change
- 11.3 Manufacturing and related service industry
- 11.4 The management of change in manufacturing industry

Section 12 | Environmental management

- 12.1 Sustainable energy supplies
- 12.2 The management of energy supply
- 12.3 Environmental degradation
- 12.4 The management of a degraded environment

Section 13 | Global interdependence

- 13.1 Trade flows and trading patterns
- 13.2 International debt and international aid
- 13.3 The development of international tourism
- 13.4 The management of a tourist destination

Section 14 | Economic transition

- 14.1 National development
- 14.2 The globalisation of economic activity
- 14.3 Regional development within countries
- 14.4 The management of regional development

Guided learning hours

This syllabus is designed around 180 guided learning hours for Cambridge International AS Level, and around 360 guided learning hours for Cambridge International A Level.

These figures are for guidance only. The number of hours needed to gain the qualification may vary depending on the learners' previous experience of the subject.

Awarding and reporting

Cambridge International A Level results are shown by one of the grades A*, A, B, C, D or E, indicating the standard achieved, A* being the highest and E the lowest. 'Ungraded' indicates that the candidate's performance fell short of the standard required for grade E.

Cambridge International AS Level results are shown by one of the grades a, b, c, d or e, indicating the standard achieved, 'a' being the highest and 'e' the lowest. 'Ungraded' indicates that the candidate's performance fell short of the standard required for grade 'e'.

Progression

Cambridge International A Level Geography provides a suitable foundation for the study of Geography or related courses in higher education. Equally it is suitable for candidates intending to pursue careers or further study in Planning, Environmental Subjects, Development, Tourism, etc., or as part of a course of general education.

Cambridge International AS Level Geography is the first half of the Cambridge International A Level course in Geography and therefore provides a suitable foundation for the study of Geography at Cambridge International A Level and then for related courses in higher education. Depending on local university entrance requirements, the qualification may permit or assist progression directly to university courses in Geography or some other subjects. It is also suitable for learners intending to pursue careers or further study in Planning, Environmental Subjects, Development, Tourism, etc., or as part of a course of general education.