



STRUCTURE OF THE GCSE GEOGRAPHY EXAM



Our Year 11 students are sitting the AQA specification – the website is here
<http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/geography/specifications/AQA-8035-SP-2016.PDF>

The GCSE exam is made up of 3 components

The breakdown and dates of the exams for the three modules are given below:

- Unit 1 – Living with the Physical Environment – 35% of GCSE 1hr 30 min exam
- Unit 2 – Living with the Human Environment – 35% of GCSE 1hr 30 min exam
- Unit 3 – Geographical Applications – 30% of GCSE 1hr 15 min exam (this includes some questions based on pre-released materials that will be made available 12 weeks before the Paper 3 exam) .

Within the course there are some options that schools have – with regards to the specification, at St Ivo we are **NOT** doing Cold Environments or Glacial Landscapes in the UK in Unit 1 and we are **NOT** doing Food or Energy in Unit 2.

GCSE Geography Help Clinic

In addition to the revision programme staff run a KS4 Geography clinic on a Friday lunchtime in N16 which is open to any KS4 students. The room is open to work in or revision, alone or in small groups, and there is always a member of staff on hand to answer any questions / concerns that students have.

During the revision period, students with any questions or whom need help with particular aspects of the course are welcome to come along and speak to staff in these lunchtime sessions, or simply to use the room as revision space.

Revision support resources:

It is essential that students undertake thorough revision and preparation themselves. Whilst we will help students with exam technique, with regards to question and answer structure in after school sessions, **the onus has to be on students to be revising and learning the actual geographical content at home.** There are many resources that they can use to help them:

- **All teaching resources on Schoology** – PowerPoints etc. for the whole course written by the department and used in our teaching are available to students on the GCSE Geography Schoology course www.schoology.com – all have access to this and should have signed up – they can see their teacher for the code if they haven't yet done so. (this is a good reference point as it includes all the specific case studies and examples we have covered). Also useful if students have any notes missing!
- **BBC Bitesize GCSE Geography AQA**
<https://www.bbc.com/education/examspecs/zy3ptyc>
- **Fortnightly afterschool exam technique revision classes** (see revision schedule at the end of the letter)
- **PiXL Geography app** (can be used on computers or personal devices) – staff will be providing students with details of this over the next few weeks (includes self-check quizzes)
- **GCSEPod** www.gcsepod.com (further details of this will be given to students shortly on how they can log in) – audio-visual revision support.
- **Twitter** [@StIvoGeography](https://twitter.com/StIvoGeography) – used to remind you of key ideas / relevant information and from March onwards – revision specific tweets.
- **Department Facebook (St Ivo School Geography Department)** - reminder of revision links and from March onwards – revision specific posts.
- **Geography Department website** www.geobytes.org.uk – reminders and revision support as well as direct link to all revision resources will be available on our website from the end of January at the latest.

And of course most importantly – their exercise books!

There are several commercially produced revision guides available for our course. Some examples include:

- - New Grade 9-1 GCSE Geography AQA Revision Guide (CGP) - ISBN-10: 1782946101
- - New Grade 9-1 GCSE Geography AQA Complete Revision & Practice (includes exam questions) (CGP) ISBN-10: 1782946136

There are others available (including from publishers such as Scholastic, Collins, Hodder, Oxford) – as this is the first year of the course and these are just being published we don't at this stage have one single recommended one as we haven't seen them all yet.

Please note – revision guides will be good for revising key geographical concepts, but these are commercially produced ones and **students should be learning the case studies and examples that we have covered in class** (these will not necessarily be the ones in the revision guides as schools can choose their own) – **students should be using their own class notes to revise these** and a separate booklet including reminder details of our case studies and examples will be made available to students immediately after February half term – they should use this alongside revision guides.

Students should also remember that we are NOT studying Glaciation, Food or Energy options – it is important they stick to any checklists that are given.

GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT REVISION PROGRAMME (January - May)

The Geography Department are running an afterschool revision programme to support Year 11 Geographers in working towards their target grades with a focus on developing exam technique through familiarity with how to tackle exam questions. The sessions will take place fortnightly on a Thursday after school (Week A). We would like to strongly encourage as many students as possible to attend.

The timetable is below.

KEEPING UP-TO-DATE WITH NOTES

It is really important that students take responsibility for catching up any work missed as all content is in the specification and therefore could be required in an exam. If students do miss a lesson, they are expected to catch up – they can do this either by coming to see me or looking at the GCSE Schoology page where all of the lesson PowerPoints can be found.

Date	Topic / Focus	Staff
25 th January	Natural Hazards	Cb (N16) / Yo (N13)
8 th February	Ecosystems	Nn (N19) / We (N17)
01 March	Coasts and Rivers	Re (N15) / Cb (N16)
15 th March	Urban Change	Cb (N16) / Re (N15)
29 th March (lunchtime)	Economic Development	Nn (N19) / Yo (N13)
26 th April	Resource Management	Cb (N16) / Re (N15)
3rd May	Decision Making	We (N17) / Yo (N13)
22nd May 2018 - Unit 1 Living with the Physical Environment (pm) 1hr 30		
5th June 2018 – Unit 2 Living with the Human Environment (pm) 1hr 30		
11th June 2018 – Geographical Applications paper (pm) 1hr 15		

We will continue to use Go4Schools to update any further end of unit test results / assessment grades. Homework will continue to be set on a regular basis and is an important part of the course helping students to consolidate their understanding. Parent/carers can track homework progress on Go4Schools - if it is not being completed we will demerit students via Go4Schools so that you are aware. Students are also expected to be revising and preparing for their GCSEs exams outside of lesson time, alongside 'set' homework (which will focus on practise questions)

Advice for students

1. Start revision now! This will help to reduce stress later
2. Organise your notes, make sure you haven't got anything missing and go through the specification checklist.
3. Make a realistic revision timetable that can be stuck to (time available will need to be balanced for the various subjects studied)
4. Productive short bursts of revision should be planned (max one hour at a time) and some relaxation time should be planned in – exercise will also really help!
5. Make sure you learn case studies / examples (a list will be provided by the department) – you will need to ensure you learn facts and figures to back these up)
6. A range of revision strategies should be used – there is some revision advice available for students on our website www.geobytes.org.uk and links will be posted on our twitter (@StIvoGeographers) and Facebook page (St Ivo Geography Department) frequently on the run up to the exams with advice and tips for students.

What can you do as parents/carers?

We fully appreciate that there are huge academic and organisational demands on students in the run up to the exam period. Parent support encouragement and interest can make a huge contribution to student's motivation and most importantly their ability to cope at this.

- Help them to make a revision plan
- If possible, try and help ensure that there is a quiet space where students can work without distractions.
- Encourage your son/daughter to balance the format of their revision - some might be with pen and paper some might be using revision video resources or using the web-based resources we have produced as a department
- It is normal for students to fall behind, start to feel overwhelmed or find it difficult to balance work, school and social demands. Helping them to stay positive and talk through these issues as they arise can help. Helping them get things in perspective is important.
- Offer to test them on case study detail etc. (There are flash cards available on our blog with questions and answers!)
- Above all help to keep them positive and praise their hard work!

There is some useful advice on helping your child revise here: <https://revisionapp.co.uk/gcse-revision-essential-guide-parents/>

Further Information / Lead up to the exams.

Over the next few months we will continue to provide support for revision through our twitter feed @StIvoGeography and Facebook page (St Ivo Geography Department) and our website www.geobytes.org.uk also has links to all of our online resources.

Maintaining a dialogue with your son/daughter's teacher is also invaluable; please do not hesitate to email us with any questions or concerns that you have. We would also encourage students to maintain dialogue with their teachers and be prepared to take responsibility for asking if there is anything they do not fully understand.

STAFF EMAIL ADDRESSES:

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We wish your son/daughter the best of luck with their exams and revision preparation.

The Geography Team.
St Ivo School Geography Department

