



Preparing for success in GCSE Geography – Parent/Carers Guide

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. Students have been told this and reminded.

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 aspects of the course are welcome to come along and speak to staff during lunchtime, 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:

- **Schoology** (all GCSE Teaching Resources can be found here) – 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. This is also useful if students have any notes missing! There are also downloadable question/answer revision cards for all topics, case study summaries and Unit 1 / unit 2 question practice booklets for downloading. The case study booklet is a useful accompaniment to revision guides as it focuses on the case studies we use as a department.
- **BBC Bitesize GCSE Geography AQA** <https://www.bbc.com/education/examspecs/zy3ptyc>
- **Afterschool exam technique revision classes** (see schedule at the end of the letter)
- **GCSEPod** www.gcsepod.com – audio-visual revision support.
- **Educake** – all students have an educake online account which means they can self-test themselves to support revision and in particular practice short answer questions.
- **PiXL Geography app** (can be used on computers or personal devices) – also includes self-check quizzes.
- **Twitter** @StIvoGeography and **Instagram** <https://www.instagram.com/stivogeography/> – used to remind students of key ideas / relevant information and from Feb/March onwards – revision specific tweets.
- **Department Facebook (St Ivo School Geography Department)** - reminder of revision links and from March onwards there will be revision specific posts and important reminders.
- **Geography Department website** www.geobytes.org.uk – reminders and links to all revision resources

And of course, most importantly – their exercise books!

The department have published bespoke revision guides for Unit 1 and Unit 2 written by the department to include key content summaries as well as the examples / case studies we are studying as part of the course. These are available for all students to download free of charge from the Revision folder on Schoology (see below) so that they can be used straight away. If students wish to purchase printed copies of the revision guides ready for next year you can purchase these via ParentMail as a bundle for £3.70 (this just covers printing costs). **Please note these are printed to order, so if there are none in stock they may be a few days before purchase and receiving order whilst more copies are printed.** Students will be given a free copy of the Unit 3 revision guide as they will be using this in class. **Please note if you purchased these in Year 10 last year they are the same versions so students do not need to buy them again.**

There are of course several commercially produced revision guides available for our course should you prefer (however students should make sure they only revise the topics that we are doing and also stick to our case studies / examples).

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 their teacher or looking at the GCSE Schoology page where all the lesson PowerPoints can be found.

TRACKING PROGRESS / HOMEWORK

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 (see homework schedule) 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 indicate this via a negative point on Go4Schools so that you are aware.

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 / Instagram (@StIvoGeographers) and Facebook page (St Ivo Geography Department) frequently on the run up to the exams with advice and tips for students.
7. **It is also very important that students do plan in some time off / down time to get some balance and ensure they are looking after themselves.**

GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT REVISION PROGRAMME (January – May 2020)

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 on Monday after school (apart from a couple which will be on Tuesday as indicated) and a full timetable is provided below.

We would like to strongly encourage as many students as possible to attend. We appreciate that students will have other subjects as well so we have published the topic focus for each session so students can make informed choices about which particular sessions they might attend.

We suggest students look over their mock exams and areas of weakness as a guide for which sessions to attend.

Date	Topic / Focus	Staff
21 st January (TUES)	Physical Landscapes/Coasts	Cb (N16) and Re (N15)
27 th January (MON)	Rivers	Fh (N16) and We (N17)
3 rd February (MON)	Natural Hazards and Tectonics / Extreme Weather	Cb (N16) and Re (N15)
10 th February (MON)	Climate Change	Yo (N16) and Fh (N19)
24 th February (MON)	Ecosystems & Rainforests	Cb (N16) and Re (N15)
2 nd March (MON)	Deserts & Desertification	Yo (N16) and Fh (N19)
9 th March (MON)	Rapid Urban Growth – Nigeria	Cb (N16) and We (N17)
16 th March (MON)	Rapid Urban Growth - London	Cb (N16) and We (N17)
23 rd March (MON)	Development	Fh (N19)
30 th March (MON)	Rapid Economic Growth – Nigeria	Cb (N16) and Yo (N13)
21 st April (TUES)	The UK's Changing Economy	Yo (N19) and We (N17)
27 th April (MON)	Resource Management – UK	Cb (N16) and Fh (N19)
4 th May (MON)	Water – Global Demand	Yo (N16) and We (N17)
11 th May (MON)	Skills – Unfamiliar / Familiar Fieldwork and Decision-Making Exercise	Cb (N16) and Fh (N19)
<i>Just in time Revision Sessions will also be planned – details of which will be made available nearer the time.</i>		
<i>18th May 2020 - Unit 1 Living with the Physical Environment (am) 1hr 30</i>		
<i>3rd June 2020 – Unit 2 Living with the Human Environment (am) 1hr 30</i>		
<i>11th June 2020 – Geographical Applications paper (am) 1hr 15</i>		

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 (and make sure that they include some time off within this – having breaks and things to look forward to are important in helping their mental health as well)
- 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! and case study booklets you can test them from)
- 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.

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 – we are always happy to help.

YEAR 11 GEOGRAPHY 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

