In Year 9, you have already started studying GCSE Geography and starting to develop the

examination skills required to be successful. The subject bridges the gap between the

sciences and the arts and covers contemporary global issues; having an understanding of

these will become very important in your future life.

The GCSE Geography qualification is a linear course with all examinations sat at the end of

the course (Year 11). The new specification contains a unit 1 exam based on the physical

environment, a unit 2 exam based on the human environment and unit 3 exam based on

issue evaluation and fieldwork.

The subject content is split into four units: 3.1 Living with the physical environment, 3.2

Challenge in the human environment, 3.3. Geographical applications and 3.4 Geographical

skills.

In units 3.1 and 3.2 the content is split into sections, with each section focusing on a

particular geographical theme.

Unit 3.3 sets out the requirements for fieldwork and issue evaluation.

Unit 3.4 sets out the geographical skills that students are required to develop and

Demonstrate.

GCSE breakdown

Unit 1: Living with the physical environment -

Section A: The challenge of natural hazards -

Tectonic hazards, Tropical storms, Extreme

weather in the UK, Climate change.

Section B: Physical landscapes in the UK - UK physical

landscapes, River landscapes in the UK, Glacial

landscapes in the UK. Section C: The living world –

Ecosystems & Tropical rainforests, Hot deserts.

Unit 2: Challenges in the human environment - Urban issues and challenges, the changing

economic world and the challenge of resource management.

Unit 3: Geographical applications - Issue evaluation - Synopticity, critical thinking and

problem-solving. Fieldwork - Questions based on the use of fieldwork in an unfamiliar

context and questions based on students’ individual enquiry work.

3.1 Living with the physical environment

This unit is concerned with the physical processes and systems, their dynamic nature and

human interaction with them at a range of scales and in a range of places.

The aims of this unit are to develop an

understanding of the processes and

forms associated with tectonic,

geomorphological, biological and

meteorological processes in different

environments, and the need for

management strategies governed by

sustainability and consideration of the

direct and indirect effects of human

interaction with the earth and

Atmosphere.

3.2 Challenges in the human environment

This unit is concerned with human processes, systems and outcomes and how these

change both spatially and temporally. They are studied in a range of places, at a variety of

scales and must include places in various states of development.

The aims of this unit are to develop an understanding of the factors that produce a diverse

variety of human environments; the dynamic nature of these environments that change over

time and place; the need for sustainable management; and the areas of current and future

challenge and opportunity for these environments.

3.3 Geographical applications

This unit is designed to have elements of synopticity. It is an opportunity for students to

show their breadth of understanding and appreciation of the inter-relationships between

different aspects of geographical study.

Issue evaluation – This section contributes a critical thinking

and problem-solving element to the assessment structure. It

provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate

geographical skills and applied knowledge and

understanding by looking at a particular issue(s) derived from

the specification using secondary sources. The issue(s) will

arise from any aspect of the subject content but may extend

beyond it through the use of resources. They can then

analyse a geographical issue at a range of scales, consider

and select proposed solutions and justify their choices.

Fieldwork – Students will need to undertake two geographical enquiries. The first fieldwork

enquiry will be based upon the content in unit 3.1.2 (River landscapes in the UK). This will

be carried out in Year 10. The second fieldwork enquiry will take place in Year 11 and will

be based upon the regeneration in a local urban area.