

Geography

I. Course description and aims

Geography is a dynamic subject firmly grounded in the real world, and focuses on the interactions between individuals, societies and physical processes in both time and space. It seeks to identify trends and patterns in these interactions. It also investigates the way in which people adapt and respond to change, and evaluates actual and possible management strategies associated with such change. Geography describes and helps to explain the similarities and differences between different places, on a variety of scales and from different perspectives.

Geography as a subject is distinctive in its spatial dimension and occupies a middle ground between social or human sciences and natural sciences. The course integrates physical, environmental and human geography, and students acquire elements of both socio-economic and scientific methodologies. Geography takes advantage of its position to examine relevant concepts and ideas from a wide variety of disciplines, helping students develop life skills and have an appreciation of, and a respect for, alternative approaches, viewpoints and ideas.

Students at both Standard Level and Higher Level are presented with a common core and optional geographic themes. Higher Level students also study the Higher Level core extension. Although the skills and activity of studying geography are common to all students, Higher Level students are required to acquire a further body of knowledge, to demonstrate critical evaluation and to further synthesize the concepts in the Higher Level extension.

The aims of the geography course at Standard Level and Higher Level are to enable students to:

1. develop an understanding of the dynamic interrelationships between people, places, spaces and the environment at different scales
2. develop a critical awareness and consider complexity thinking in the context of the nexus of geographic issues, including:
3. acquiring an in-depth understanding of how geographic issues, or wicked problems, have been shaped by powerful human and physical processes
4. synthesizing diverse geographic knowledge in order to form viewpoints about how these issues could be resolved.
5. understand and evaluate the need for planning and sustainable
6. development through the management of resources at varying scales.

II. Curriculum model overview

Geographic themes—seven options

Standard Level—two options; Higher Level— three options

- Freshwater
- Oceans and coastal margins
- Extreme environments
- Geophysical hazards
- Leisure, tourism and sport
- Food and health
- Urban environments

Standard and Higher Level core

Geographic perspectives—global change

- Population distribution—changing population
- Global climate—vulnerability and resilience
- Global resource consumption and security

Higher Level only

Geographic perspectives—global interactions

- Power, places and networks
- Human development and diversity
- Global risks and resilience

Internal assessment

Standard and Higher Level Fieldwork

- Fieldwork, leading to one written report based on a fieldwork question, information collection and analysis with evaluation