Mapping the new 2008 Edexcel GCE AS/A2 Geography specification to the current Edexcel GCE AS/A2 Geography specification A

General Introduction

The change from one specification to another inevitably involves significant changes in course content and, with changing technology, changes in style of delivery. Indeed it would be an odd reflection on a subject if there were no material changes in a specification after eight years. This is particularly true for those subjects which are concerned with the world in which we live, such as geography. Academic geography bears little resemblance to the subject as it was delivered 20 years ago and school geography needs both to reflect these changes and to offer students a proper insight into issues that so dominate the modern world and provide them with the critical faculties to interpret them.

The following material is specifically designed to help current Edexcel A centres who have either already decided to adopt the new Edexcel specification (first AS examination in June 2009) or are contemplating making this change. In order to facilitate this process a 'mapping' exercise has been conducted that outlines how the 'new' and the 'old' overlap.

The material is presented in the following way. For both of the AS units each sub-section is rated according to the degree of overlap using the following levels.

Level 5	Excellent overlap. Almost all new content covered albeit with some rearrangement and sorting of current teaching materials.
Level 4	Good overlap. Most new content covered although often involving a different application or interpretation of current material.
Level 3	Satisfactory overlap although involving some new content and a rearrangement and reinterpretation of current materials.
Level 2	Indifferent, patchy, overlap involving a good deal of new material and considerable rearrangement of current materials.
Level 1	Poor overlap thus requiring a good deal of new teaching material and a different context in the application of existing material.

The new content is offered under ‘What students need to learn’. Alongside this are the cross-references to the current Edexcel A content identifying units, sections and, occasionally, case-studies. Where new material is needed *italics* are used in the ‘Current A coverage’ column. It is recognised that current Edexcel A centres already make selections at A2 in that most centres choose to teach two out of the three sections of both Unit 4 and Unit 5. These choices will obviously impact on the degree of overlap in coverage commented on throughout this exercise.

For the A2 units a general overview is offered for each section identifying clear areas of overlap and obvious areas where new material will be necessary. A summative comment and a level of agreement are offered.

Introduction to the AS units

A review of the 'levels' for each sub-section suggests that there is a very high degree of overlap at AS level between the new specification and material currently taught by Edexcel 'A' centres over the two years. The following observations can be made.

- There is a high degree of overlap between the two units and material currently taught by A centres
- Much of the overlap is with material currently taught in Units 4 and 5, that is to say in Year 13 thus there will inevitably be some reduction in levels of demand, depth of analysis and understanding of process.
- The most obvious losses from current teaching material are;
    1. Tectonic processes
    2. Fluvial processes and landforms
    3. Settlement patterns

Unit 1: Global Challenges

- There are no choices to be made here. All sections are compulsory. The emphasis throughout is on the causes, human and otherwise, and consequences on man and the physical environment of potentially hazardous processes.

1. Global hazards (LEVEL 5)

Enquiry question: What are the main types of physical risks facing the world and how big a threat are they?

What students need to learn	Current A coverage
• Disasters result when hydro-meteorological hazards (cyclones, droughts and floods); and geophysical hazards (earthquakes, volcanoes and landslides/avalanches) threaten the life and property of increasing numbers of the world's people.	Many hazards covered in synoptic links for Unit 6, in Unit 1 for flooding and in Unit 4. Focus shifts towards knowledge of impact.
• The **R**isk of disaster grows as global **H**azards and people's **V**ulnerability increases, while their **C**apacity to cope decreases.	Same sources as above
• Global warming arguably the greatest hazard we currently face is a chronic hazard; has widespread impacts; raises issues of injustice (polluters and vulnerable victims); and has complex solutions.	Currently covered in the synoptic link to Unit 4 (Section A). Solutions may need a little additional material, some of which might be drawn from synoptic discussion.

2. Global hazard trends (LEVEL 5)

Enquiry question: How and why are natural hazards now becoming seen as an increasing global threat?

What students need to learn	Current A coverage
• Some types of hazards are increasing in magnitude and frequency, and having greater impacts upon people and their lives.	Material covered in Unit 1 under river flooding and the Unit 4 (Section A) synoptic link on weather and human activity

• Natural disasters are increasing because of a combination of physical and human factors
  • The unpredictability of global warming and El Nino events leading to increasing natural hazards
  • The increasing exploitation of resources (deforestation), world poverty, rapid population growth and urbanisation.
	As above but IPAT ideas are also covered in synoptic material on population/resource and in Unit 5 (Section C) on discussion on relationship between development and environment. Deforestation is covered in Unit 4 (Section B).

• Trends show that the number of people killed is falling, whereas the number affected, and the economic losses are escalating.	This idea is covered in several areas but most familiar in the preparation for the synoptic essay (Question 2)

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3. Global hazard patterns (LEVEL 5)

Enquiry question: Why are some places more hazardous and disaster-prone than others?

What students need to learn	Current A coverage
• An assessment of the real or potential natural hazard risks by using evidence about past or likely future events and their impact on people, property and the environment in their local area.	Currently covered in Unit 1 (Section A and B) case study material (Boscastle, 2007 floods, Mount St. Helens, Kobe etc.) and in preparation for synoptic essay in Year 13.
• The distribution of the world's major natural hazards both hydrometeorological hazards and geophysical hazards (see 1).	Covered in Unit 4 (Section A) and in preparation for synoptic essay, Question 2.

• Disaster hotspots occur when two or more hazards occur in vulnerable places:
  • case study of the California coast
  • case study of the Philippines; a vulnerable location.
	As before covered in both Section A and B of Unit 1 and Section A of Unit 4. Familiar ideas for preparation of synoptic essay Question 2

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4. Climate change and its causes (LEVEL 4)

Enquiry question: Is global warming a recent short term phenomenon or should it be seen as part of longer-term climate change?

What students need to learn	Current A coverage
• The current phenomenon of global warming should be set in the context of longer, medium and short term climate change. A range of evidence from ecology, historical records and climate change should be reviewed.	The basic idea is covered in the synoptic link to Unit 4, Section A, but some supplementary material will be needed on '*range of evidence….'.*
• The causes of climate change may be both natural and human (anthropogenic).	Covered in Unit 4 (section A synoptic link)
• Recent climate change (global warming) is unprecedented in historical terms and scientists now argue that human causes may be more to blame.	The idea is covered but new teaching material will need to be gathered for the '*unprecedented in historical terms…..'*

5. The impacts of global warming (LEVEL 3)

Enquiry question: What are the impacts of climate change and why should we be concerned?

What students need to learn	Current A coverage

• The direct impacts of projected global climate changes:
  • A case study of environmental and ecological impacts of Arctic warming in the Arctic region.
  • A case study of the complexities of economic impacts across the African continent and how it could lead to disasters for poor people
	New case studies will be needed here. The stress needs to be on projected problems as well as current problems

• The indirect impacts such as the eustatic rise in sea level (global inundation).	Material covered in Unit 1 (Section C) both in general teaching and in the synoptic link.
• The impacts of climate change are difficult to predict and emissions scenarios, such as the IPCC model, may vary (from 'business as usual' to sustainable) and could be affected by attempts to manage the impacts of climate change.	Some material may be covered for those centres who prepare students for Qu 3 of synoptic paper *but mostly new material here.*
• The evidence that combined impacts could lead to catastrophic, irreversible changes and contribute to a more hazardous world.	This idea is covered by many in the synoptic links *but will need supplementing in some centres*.

6. Coping with climate change (LEVEL 2)

Enquiry question: What are the strategies for dealing with climate change?

What students need to learn	Current A coverage

• How strategies:
  • attempt to limit the impacts of climate change at various scales
  • involve adapting to climate change.
	Some of this is covered, directly and indirectly, in the management links especially to Unit 1, Section C (coastal processes).

• The conflicting views and role of the key players in managing climate change — including governments, business, NGOs, individuals and groups. The complexities of a global agreement.	*Most of this will be new material for current A centres* although the debate is familiar at a general level in synoptic teaching.
• Whilst most people argue for 'act local, think global', management is needed at all scales and progress is likely to be incremental.	As above the debate is taught by many centres but *new material will be needed to supplement the general idea.*

7. The challenge of global hazards for the future (LEVEL 2)

Enquiry question: How should we tackle the global challenges of increasing risk and vulnerability in a more hazardous world?

What students need to learn	Current A coverage
• Increasing risk and uncertainty threatens major disruption to people and the environment at a global scale bringing water shortages and food insecurity.	Ideas are currently taught through case-studies for synoptic teaching (Ogallala aquifer. Colorado river etc.) *but focus will need to change.*
• The world should recognise that global warming is one of the biggest challenges it has faced and make innovative choices, adopt sustainable strategies and understand the cost and benefits involved.	*Frequently, although not universally, taught as part of sustainability debate in Year 13 but will need re-focussing.*
• Solutions to a hazardous world, at all scales, need to focus on the underlying issues of risk and vulnerability.	As above there is overlap here for the many centres that prepare students for the 'hazards' essay.

1. Globalisation (LEVEL 5)

Enquiry question: What is globalisation and how is it changing people's lives?

What students need to learn	Current A coverage
• The concept and development of globalisation (the connections between people and environments across the globe).	Extensively covered in Unit 5, both in Section A and C. Also discussed in Unit 2, Section C.
• The factors which have accelerated globalisation.	Again extensively covered in Unit 5, both in Section A and Section C.
• The effects of globalisation on population movements.	Investigated through case-studies for Unit 2, Section C, for example Mexican migration to SW USA.

2. Global groupings (LEVEL5)

Enquiry question: What are the main groupings of nations and what differences in levels of power and wealth exist?

What students need to learn	Current A coverage
• The disparities in global wealth and poverty, through broad economic and political groupings of countries (such as NICs, OPEC, LEDCs, LDCs, OECD, and trade blocs like NAFTA).	Extensively covered in Unit 5, in all sections but especially Section C.
• TNCs play a crucial role in the development and spread of global business and trade.	Covered in Unit 5, Section A and Section C

3. Global networks (LEVEL 4)

Enquiry question: Why, as places and societies become more interconnected, do some places show extreme wealth and poverty?

What students need to learn	Current A coverage
• Global networks (such as air travel, TNCs, and tourism) create flows of trade, money, workers and information, which 'switch on' some places making them rich and powerful; while others may become 'switched off' and remain poor.	*Network idea is not explicit and some supplementary material needed on tourism* but other flows covered in Unit 5, Sections A and C.
• The role of technology (such as communications and the internet) in a shrinking world.	Impact of technology covered in several areas, most explicitly in Unit 6, Section A in discussion of location.
• Why some places are 'winners' as significant producers and consumers, having valuable physical and human resources; whereas others are 'losers' remaining poorly connected.	Covered in Unit 5 under discussion of role of resources (Section C) and in Section B in discussion of global cities. *Will need some rearrangement and refocusing.*

4. Roots (LEVEL 5)

Enquiry question: How does evidence from personal, local and national sources help us understand the pattern of population change in the UK?

What students need to learn	Current A coverage
• An analysis of population change (family size, population structure, migration, employments and social and aspirations) using family histories or records.	This is covered in Unit 2, Section A and C although not specifically *'family histories and records'*
• How social and economic factors such as 20th century changes in patterns of work and improvements in health, hygiene, nutrition and education have had an impact on UK population and migration.	Covered in Unit 2, largely Section A but also some in Section C. Currently taught in framework of demographic transition.
• The geographical challenges resulting from a greying population.	Covered extensively in Unit 2, Section A.

5. On the move (LEVEL 4)

Enquiry question: How is migration changing to face of the EU?

What students need to learn	Current A coverage
• Key migrations into Europe at an international scale, contrasting recent and earlier (post-colonial) flows.	Many centres will have the appropriate case-studies form their teaching of Unit 2, Section C. such as Caribbean migration to the UK. *Others may need to introduce new material.*

• Key movements within Europe include:
  • A case study of post-accession labour flows from eastern Europe.
  • A case study of retirement flows to Mediterranean locations.
	Some will already have case-studies such as Britons retiring to Spain. Others may have case-studies on Polish migration to the UK. *Others may need to introduce new material.*

• The economic, social, environmental and political consequences of these movements and the issues and reactions they create.	This is covered in the causes and consequences of international migration in Unit 2, Section C.

6. World cities (LEVEL 5)

Enquiry question: What is driving the new urbanisation taking place and what are its consequences?

What students need to learn	Current A coverage
• How rural-urban population migration feeds the growth of million and megacities.	Covered extensively in those centres that teach Section B of Unit 4. Also covered in Unit 2, (Sections B and C).
• Megacities in differing countries develop in contrast ways, focusing on destinations for newcomers (shanty towns and inner city) and movers (suburbanisation).	Covered in Unit 2, Section B, and in Unit 5, also Section B.
• The consequences of this new growth, especially in megacities and whether it can be sustained.	Sustainable urban growth is covered in Unit 4 with synoptic links to problems of urban growth as well as specific references to management problems of cities.

7. Global challenges for the future (LEVEL 4)

Enquiry question: What are the social and environmental consequences of globalisation and can we manage these changes for a better world?

What students need to learn	Current A coverage
• Globalisation brings both positive and negative changes ie a two-speed world.	This debate is central to Unit 5, Section C.
• The moral and social consequences of globalisation, such as the exploitation of workers or cultures in some countries.	This is debated in Unit 5, mostly in Section A but also in Section C
• Reducing the environmental and social costs of globalisation requires action at a variety of scales from local (recycling/landfill etc) to global (carbon credit trading, etc).	There is synoptic coverage of the key ideas here, but most centres will need to develop new material on '*action at a variety of scales……*' .
• The viability of green strategies and ethical purchases to conserve and manage resources to create a more equitable world (such as buying locally or fair trading).	The idea of fair trade is covered in Unit 5. Section C. The debate about green strategies is often addressed in the teaching of the synoptic paper. *However new material will be needed by many for 'The viability of greens strategies.. '*

Unit 2: Geographical Investigation

There are choices to be made here. One physical topic and one human topic needs to be selected. The research and fieldwork skills are already deeply embedded in Specification A in the preparation of students for either 6463/01 (coursework option) or 6463/02 (the Applied Geographical Skills paper). However there are obvious changes in that there is a considerable element of taught material in the new specification, both knowledge and understanding of the content are expected as well as the utilisation of skills as is the present focus.

Centre choices will probably be driven by current specialisms; those doing Section A in Unit 4 and prepare students for Question 2 on the synoptic paper may be attracted to 'Extreme Weather' whilst others may prefer to opt for 'Crowded Coasts'. For the human topics centres that teach Section B and Section C in combination for Unit 5 are at a clear advantage, with much more overlap on 'Unequal Spaces' than in 'Rebranding Places'.

1. Extreme weather watch (LEVEL 5)

Enquiry question: What are extreme weather conditions and how and why do they lead to extreme weather events?

What students need to learn	Current A coverage
• There is a wide variety of extreme (severe or unexpected) weather phenomena.	For those centres doing Unit 4 Section A much of this is familiar
• **Fieldwork and research**, using a weather diary and synoptic maps, into meteorological conditions (air masses, pressure systems and fronts) which can influence changes in temperatures, precipitation and winds. These lead to contrasting weather events such as the development of a depression or seasonal anticyclones.	Once again those teaching Unit 4, Section A, will have covered all of this material.
• Contrasting examples of how extreme weather conditions develop such as hurricanes, snow and ice, and drought.	With a small change in focus this is covered in Unit 4, Section A.

2. Extreme impacts (LEVEL 5)

Enquiry question: What are the impacts of extreme weather on people, the economy and the environment?

What students need to learn	Current A coverage
• An extreme weather hazard can have different impacts depending on the severity of the event, a location's level of economic development and the vulnerability of those affected.	This is currently taught within the preparation for Question 2 on the synoptic paper.

• **Fieldwork and research** into the social, economic and environmental impacts of extreme weather created by:
  • an immediate disastrous weather event — such as a tornado or hurricane
  • a subsequent additional hazard — such as localised river flooding
  • a longer term trend or condition — such as a heat wave or drought.
	Flood case-studies such as Boscastle are taught in Unit 1, Section B, whilst Unit 4, Section A covers the weather events. The independent research and fieldwork approach is well embedded in current specification A centres.

3. Increasing risks (LEVEL 4)

Enquiry question: How are people and places increasingly at risk from and vulnerable to extreme weather?

What students need to learn	Current A coverage
• Evidence that extreme weather hazards in the UK and elsewhere are becoming more frequent and involve higher risk due to natural and human causes such as climate change, demographics and land management.	This includes some reorganisation of existing Unit 1 and Unit 4 material and some new material especially '*…land management'.*

• **Fieldwork and research** to investigate how a small stream or part of a river catchment can suffer increased flood risks resulting from:
  • meteorological causes
  • the physical characteristics of the area
  • growing urbanisation, land use change and attempts at management.
	Many centres conduct a field day as part of the preparation for 6463/02 which involves working in a small catchment. That work needs minor modification

4. Managing extreme weather (LEVEL 2)

Enquiry question: How can we best respond to and cope with the impacts of extreme weather?

What students need to learn	Current A coverage
• **Fieldwork and research** into ways of managing and responding to extreme weather events using short and longer term strategies, and how some management strategies are more successful than others.	This is largely new material although there is some overlap with Unit 4 synoptic material and also for those centres preparing students for Question 2 on the synoptic paper.
• The role of new technology in improving community preparedness, event forecasting and reducing impacts of disasters.	Those who are preparing students for Question 2 of the synoptic paper will be familiar with this approach but not exclusively for managing extreme weather.
• Ways to manage drought through physical, social, economic and political responses in contrasting areas.	Some centres offer case-studies here both for Unit 5, Section B and for the synoptic essay but many will need to supplement especially on '*political responses'.*

1. Competition for coasts (LEVEL 5)

Enquiry question: Why is the coastal zone so favoured for development?

What students need to learn	Current A coverage
• How physical factors create variety in a range of different coastal environments.	Basic Unit 1, Section C stuff.

• The factors which have led to exponential population growth in some coastal environments:
  • flat land, soil fertility, equable climate, and biodiversity
  • potential for fishing, recreation/tourism, industrial and port development and accessibility.
	Covered in Unit 2, Section A but probably needing refocusing in some centres.

• **Fieldwork and research** to show how these factors have shaped the development and growth of contrasting crowded coasts over time.	Covered in case studies in both Unit 1, Section C and, more particularly in Unit 2, Section A and B.

2. Coping with the pressure (LEVEL 2)

Enquiry question: How do various coastal developments create competition and conflict? How can these pressures be resolved?

What students need to learn	Current A coverage
• How development lead to patterns of zoning in coastal areas and how competition for space puts pressure on coastal environments.	There will be some limited case-study material for this in centres which have used coastal settlements as urban case studies in Unit 2, Section B or Unit 4, section B. However most centres will require new material on '*patterns of zoning in coastal areas and how competition for space puts pressure on coastal environments'.*

• **Fieldwork and research** into the pressures on the coast when development and conservation meet head on including:
  o the overuse of resources, pollution, other developments
  o the destruction of high value coastal habitats.
	This again will require largely new material in some areas especially the impacts of fishing, aquaculture, marine and beach pollution and tourism. However psammoseres and haloseres and the human impact upon these ecosystems are integral to Unit 1 (Section C) and Unit 4 (Section C)

• There are economic benefits and environmental costs to coastal development which influence the success of the development equation and involve the views of stakeholders and their conflicting needs.	Some of the generic development issues here are well known to A centres but the focus will not necessarily be on the '*environmental costs to coastal development'.* For some centres older GCSE material may provide a platform for further development such as Ayia Napa or the Maldives.

3. Increasing risks (LEVEL 4)

Enquiry question: How is coastal development increasingly at risk from and vulnerable to physical processes?

What students need to learn	Current A coverage

• The growing level of coastal development faces increasing risks from coastal erosion and flooding because of:
  • rapid coastal erosion along vulnerable coasts
  • the impact of rising sea levels in areas of dense population and high value installations, particularly those that may be subject to tsunamis and storm surges.
	Covered extensively in Unit 1, Section C. Some additional material needed on impact on populations, some of which might be gathered from teaching for synoptic essays but almost inevitably new material needed for '*the impact of rising sea levels …..particularly those that may be subject to tsunamis and storm surges'*.

• **Fieldwork and research** into rates of coastal retreat **or** degree of coastal flood risk and the resulting impacts on developments and people at a small scale.	Familiar ideas and processes from Unit 1, Section C, but might need supplementing with local case-studies, some of which may be provided by 6463/02 field days.

4. Coastal management (LEVEL 4)

Enquiry question: How is coastal management adapting to new ideas and situations?

What students need to learn	Current A coverage
• How the spectrum of coastal management strategies (hard engineering to 'do nothing') has evolved into shoreline management planning.	This is covered explicitly in one of the synoptic links to Unit 1, Section C. For some centres it will involve upgrading of some GCSE material.
• **Fieldwork and research** into: o the success of coastal defence schemes o the value of strategies used to manage a high value coastal environment.	As above much has been covered by the synoptic link although some supplementary work will be needed on '*the value of strategies used to manage a high value coastal environment'.*
• Management strategies for the future include sustainable and integrated approaches such as coastal realignment and Shoreline Management plans(ICZM).	Concepts will be understood from the above source and synoptic work but detail will occasionally be missing and some updating will be necessary on '*integrated approaches such as coastal realignment and Shoreline Management plans(ICZM)'.*

1. Recognising inequality (LEVEL 4)

Enquiry question: What are unequal spaces and what causes them?

What students need to learn	Current A coverage
• The idea of inequality at a variety of scales and in contrasting areas.	Covered in Unit 5, especially in Section C. Many centres already use exercises and research to support understanding.
• The processes that lead to uneven levels of environmental quality, social opportunity, wealth (and poverty) and quality of life.	This can be drawn from existing teaching in Unit 2, especially Section B, and Unit 5, both Sections B and C . Much synoptic teaching addresses environmental quality.
• **Fieldwork and research**, to explore the pattern of spatial inequality in **one** rural and **one** urban area using primary surveys and secondary data.	Many centres already incorporate at least one fieldwork day in urban areas in which inequalities are frequently addressed. Many also conduct 'virtual' fieldwork using local area statistics to support understanding of local variations. Most centres will probably need to supplement with **'***fieldwork and research …, to explore the pattern of spatial inequality in one rural ….'*

2. Inequality for whom? (LEVEL 3)

Enquiry question: What impact do unequal spaces have on people?

What students need to learn	Current A coverage
• Inequality can lead to social and economic exclusion and polarisation, by denying opportunities and access to services in urban and rural areas.	There is some overlap here with urban studies in Unit 2, Section B depending on the chosen case-studies. There is also some material in common in Unit 4, Section B. However *'…rural areas..'* will need new resources.
• How inequality creates marginalised groups in a variety of ways in rural and urban areas.	As above but more work to be done on marginalisation as a process as in *'how inequality creates marginalised groups in a variety of ways'.*
• **Fieldwork and research** into inequality can help to: o produce criteria to identify the spatial pattern of the 'haves' and 'have-nots' in rural and urban areas o design a checklist to evaluate schemes to tackle inequality.	Many centres use primary and complementary secondary (statistics and census) information to help teach inequality for Unit 2, section B and again for Unit 5. This is transferable.

3. Managing rural inequalities (LEVEL 1)

Enquiry question: How can we manage the rural inequality and improve the lives of the rural poor? How successful have particular schemes been?

What students need to learn	Current A coverage
• There are serious social, economic and environmental problems and barriers creating rural inequality that need to be overcome.	Rural inequalities are largely unexplored in the current specification. *Thus most of this is new material.*

• **Fieldwork and research** into the success of specific examples of ways to reduce rural inequalities using contrasting solutions such as:
  • appropriate technology
  • community involvement and empowerment
  • improving access to transport and services
  • local employment
  • sustainable solutions.
	As above this will involve new input into fieldwork design and classroom presentation. Many of the techniques will be well-known from those centres preparing students for the AGS paper 6463/02.

4. Managing urban inequalities (LEVEL 4)

Enquiry question: What strategies can be used to combat inequality in urban areas? How successful have particular schemes been?

What students need to learn	Current A coverage
• There are social, economic and environmental problems associated with urban inequalities and key players are involved in delivering solutions.	The classification and management of urban inequalities is covered in Unit 5, Section B.

• **Fieldwork and research** into the success of specific examples of ways to reduce urban inequalities using contrasting solutions such as:
  • self-help schemes
  • traffic and public transport
  • town planning initiatives
  • business initiatives
  • crime and policing.
	As above urban management projects are covered in Unit 5, Section B and many centres are experienced in designing urban fieldwork in preparation for the AGs paper 6463/02 .

1. Time to Rebrand (LEVEL 1)

Enquiry question: What is Rebranding and why is it needed in some places?

What students need to learn	Current A coverage
• How places re-invent and market themselves by regeneration and re-imaging to attract work, residents and visitors.	All that can be built on here is the places used as case studies in teaching Unit 2, Section B and Unit 4, Section B. *The focus is largely new.*
• Ideas for rebranding towns and the countryside focusing on leisure and tourism, National Parks, culture, festivals etc to create a sense of identity and community.	As above all that can be built on here is the places used as case studies in teaching Unit 2, Section B and Unit 4, Section B. *The focus is largely new.*
• Why rebranding is needed in some places and the social, economic and environmental processes involved.	There is more to build on here for the processes of urban change are well-known to centres form both Unit 2, Section B and Unit 5, Sections A and B
• **Fieldwork and research** into the profile of places in need of rebranding, using surveys and secondary data.	The methodology will present no difficulty for centres *even if the focus has changed*.

2. Rebranding strategies (LEVEL 2)

Enquiry question: Who are the 'Rebranding players' and what strategies exist for places to improve themselves?

What students need to learn	Current A coverage
• The potential role of players in the rebranding process.	Very little here to build on other than urban management material form Unit 5, Section B

• **Fieldwork and research** into a range of rural strategies such as:
  • Rebranding local activities and farming. Integrated projects in the post-production countryside including rural heritage and specialist 'food-towns'
  • using innovative arts and media projects and new technologies including community radio, films and the internet.
	As in other areas this is a matter of applying quite well-known fieldwork design techniques in a *largely unfamiliar context*. Urban case-studies will need modifying accordingly.

• **Fieldwork and research** into urban strategies that include the following approaches:
  • changing the built environment by rebranding of shopping, commercial and residential areas
  • promoting city identity
  • using sport as a catalyst for change and pump-priming engine
  • Rebranding a declining coastal holiday resort.
	Centres have much experience in using primary and secondary information to investigate a range of issues in urban areas but *these will need adapting to focus on the appropriate topics.* There is some background material by way of urban regeneration schemes in both Unit 2, Section B and Unit 5, Section B.

• Rebranding for a sustainable future.	• Sustainable cities are taught within Unit 5, Section B but this will need additional material if the cities used to exemplify are not conspicuous examples of ‘rebranding’.

3. Managing rural Rebranding (LEVEL 2)

Enquiry question: How successful has Rebranding been in the countryside?

What students need to learn	Current A coverage

• **Fieldwork and research** into the success of specific examples of ways to implement rural rebranding using contrasting solutions such as:
  • rural tourism – promoted via the media
  • rural technology
  • adding value locally
  • rural diversification in the post-productive countryside
	There are specific references to rural tourism and National parks within Unit 5, Section B, but *there is probably a need for updating and refocusing*.

4. Managing urban Rebranding (LEVEL 4)

Enquiry question: How successful have urban areas been in Rebranding themselves?

What students need to learn	Current A coverage

• **Fieldwork and research**, into the success of specific examples of ways to implement urban Rebranding using contrasting solutions such as:
  • flagship schemes in city centres, waterfronts, shorelines
  • gentrification of suburbs
  • heritage and tourism in historic centres
  • sport and leisure provision.
	Most centres that teach Unit 2 and Unit 5, Section B have a number of urban regeneration case studies for city centres from Nottingham to Bristol and, above all, London. These will need refocusing and weaving into well-tried techniques of independent research.

Unit 3: Contested Planet

Topics

In this unit, students should investigate the distribution of resources, and the physical factors that result in this distribution. They should also consider how humans utilise these resources, and the problems of providing resources to people as well as an awareness of the costs of doing so. Consideration should also be given to how a finite resource base should be managed. Three types of resources are considered within three topic areas:

- **Topic 1: Energy security**
- **Topic 2: Water conflicts**
- **Topic 3: Biodiversity under threat.**

The inequality in resource use is reflected in consumption patterns. A large number of resources are used by a small number of large economies, whereas many countries could be said not to use their 'fair share'. These issues are investigated through the study of:

- **Topic 4: Superpower geographies**
- **Topic 5: Bridging the development gap.**

The role of technology in overcoming resource scarcity, income inequality and environmental management is considered by investigating:

- **Topic 6: The technological fix?**

Current A coverage – a summary

Most of the issues and ideas addressed in this Unit are well-known to teachers of Edexcel A but not necessarily in the format by which they are delivered here. Thus the themes and topics are known and explored and there is a good fund of appropriate case studies in most centres, although they will need considerable rearrangement. An outline of the new material is given with a brief comment on current A coverage which is treated, as with the AS elements. The topics are covered at the following levels:

Topic 1: **Level 1** – there is little material specifically focused on energy in the current specification although some centres will have explored issues and examples that will be useful.

Topic 2: **Level 3** - the issues are known and most centres have explored at least two useful case studies of water resource usage.

Topic 3: **Level 4** – much of this is currently covered in Unit 4, Section C and the synoptic links

Topic 4: **Level 4** – although some of the acronyms may be unfamiliar much of the material is well known

Topic 5: **Level 5** – this is very familiar country for teachers on Unit 5, Section C. A little tweaking of the focus might be necessary here and there.

Topic 6: **Level 3** – Some of this can be covered with existing material from Unit 5, Section A but will need refocusing and additional material

Topic 1: Energy security

Energy

Humans use a wide range of energy sources. However, they currently depend heavily on fossil fuels; ultimately a finite resource. Physical factors mean that the geography of fossil fuels, and renewable energy potential, is uneven. Access to energy resources partly depends on physical factors, but also on the availability of capital and technology. Combined, these factors result in some areas experiencing energy surpluses (energy security), while other areas suffer energy deficit (energy insecurity). Economic wealth and potential depend on energy supply, and with demand for energy growing, there is potential for conflict over supply.

Security

Securing supply is a key issue, and there are potential environmental and political risks associated with exploiting new resources. Major players in the energy issue, such as TNCs and IGOs, are powerful and their role is increasingly important. The future of energy exploitation and supply is unclear. This is partly due to uncertainty about how long fossil fuel reserves will last, and partly due to the difficulties of finding acceptable and cost effective alternative energy sources. There is a wide range of potential future energy scenarios, each with its own supporters.

1. Energy supply, demand and security (LEVEL 1)

Enquiry question: To what extent is the world's 'energy secure' at present?

2. The impacts of energy insecurity

Enquiry question: What are the potential impacts of an increasingly 'energy secure' world?

3. Energy security and the future

Enquiry question: What might the world's energy future be?

Current A coverage

There is little specifically related to this theme in the current specification (or any other!). Some centres will have useful material that can be used such as the role of oil companies in West Africa and in South America. However, despite the 'gap' in current teaching there is little doubt that this is an issue that should be addressed by A level geography students. Many centres will have reasonable material on the last 'oil crisis' and some will have useful material on sustainable approaches to energy generation.

Summary: Interesting but much to do

LEVEL 1

Topic 2: Water conflicts

Water resources

Water, like energy, is a fundamental human need, but is not evenly distributed. Physical factors play a key role in determining the geography of surface and groundwater supplies, as does human management and mis-management of the water resource base. Increasingly demand for water, which is growing, does not match supply and this can have implications for human wellbeing. Demand for water resources comes from various users, and in addition water resources are often trans-boundary in nature.

Water conflict

The potential for conflict - both local and international - is high, and in many cases water resource use exceeds recharge capacity leading to long-term degradation. The future of water supply is in doubt in many areas, due to unsustainable use and the threat of climate change; increasingly it is already vulnerable populations who stand to suffer the most. Developing management strategies to ensure supply will require the co-operation of many different players, and changes in the way water is valued and used.

1. The geography of water supply

Enquiry question: What is the geography of water supply and demand?

2. The risks of water insecurity

Enquiry question: What are the potential implications of an increasingly 'water insecure' world?

3. Water conflicts and the future

Enquiry question: What are the possible conflicts and solutions to increasing demands for water?

Current A coverage

This is more familiar country for A centres. There is common ground in the Unit 1 material on water supply and a bank of A2 case-studies that can be redeployed. The familiarity with case-studies such as the Three Gorges Dam, the Ogallala aquifer depletion, the Aral Sea disaster, the Colorado and the more general water problems of the south-west of the USA provide a very good platform for addressing this topic.

Summary: It'll need reworking and both the demand for and management of water supplies will need adding, but the basic material is in place.

LEVEL 3

Topic 3: Biodiversity under threat

Biodiversity

Biodiversity is a key resource, which provides a range of valuable goods and critical services to human populations. Biodiversity results from natural physical processes, and as such has distinct geographical patterns. Locally, where biological resources are valued short-term for their immediate economic potential, biodiversity is often under threat through over-exploitation. However, global threats such as climate change and the role of alien species are also important.

Wellbeing

Increasingly it is recognised that human wellbeing and ecological wellbeing are inter-linked, and that biological resources need to be managed. However, concepts of the 'value' of these resources vary between different players and agreement is difficult to reach. There is a wide spectrum of management options, both locally and globally, each with its own merits and disadvantages. Reconciling the desire for development and the need to manage and maintain biodiversity is a key challenge for the future.

1. Defining biodiversity

Enquiry question: What is the nature and value of biodiversity?

2. Biodiversity threats

Enquiry question: What factors and processes threaten biodiversity?

3. Managing biodiversity

Enquiry question: Can the threats to biodiversity be successfully managed?

Current A coverage

Much of this is very familiar ground for A centres. Those who teach Unit 4, Section C, will have most of this material covered although there are also resonances of synoptic teaching, especially in the management issues addressed in the last sub-section. The questions raised about sustainability and the politics of managing the biosphere are well-known through the teaching of both Unit 5 and Unit 6.

Summary: Much is well-known although some rearrangement will be needed to incorporate the management and broader political issues involved.

LEVEL 4

Topic 4: Superpower geographies

Power

Power - both economic and political - is not evenly distributed. Some nations and players have a disproportionate influence over regional and global decision making, whereas others work within systems they have little influence over. The geography of power has developed over time, and continues to change. Some nations gain power and influence, while others lose it. Equally the nature of power has changed, from direct to more subtle control; through trade, culture, flows of capital and resources.

Rising superpowers

The economic rise of the BRICs (Brazil, Russia, India and China) brings economic benefits to many, but also potential economic costs to the 'older' superpowers (the USA and the EU), as well as having environmental and resource implications. In an increasingly globalised and inter-dependent world, it is possible that tensions will emerge as power continues to shift.

1. Superpower geographies

Enquiry question: Who are the superpowers and how does their power develop over time?

2. The role of superpowers

Enquiry question: What impacts and influence do superpowers have?

3. Superpower futures

Enquiry question: What are the implications of the continued rise of new superpowers?

Current A coverage

A great deal of this is covered in Unit 5, Section C although without the focus on the specific idea of 'superpowers' or 'BRICS'. There are very few issues involved in integrating the newer terminology and A centres certainly have the equipment to confront the issues raised.

Summary: Easy to make a few adjustments and a few newer ideas that will engage students.

LEVEL 4

Topic 5: Bridging the development gap

Development gap

The wealth of traditional and rising superpowers contrasts sharply with the continuing poverty of some peoples and nations. The gap between wealth and poverty can be measured in a variety of ways, but is generally taken to be increasing. A range of theoretical concepts can help explain the geography of the development gap, and its pattern can be illustrated through the study of trade and investment flows. The development gap can be seen in terms of rural and urban divides, and in terms of ethnicity and gender.

Reducing the gap

Development can reduce the gap, and raise people out of poverty, but it often comes with social and environmental costs, and it has not occurred in all locations. The challenge is to begin to reduce the development gap in countries and regions which have so far failed to benefit from the processes of globalisation. There are numerous ways this might be achieved, but there is no universal agreement of which way might be best.

1. The causes of the 'development gap'

Enquiry question: What is the nature of the 'development gap'? How has it arisen?

2. The consequences of the 'development gap'

Enquiry question: What are the implications of the 'development gap' at different scales for the world's poorest people?

3. Reducing the 'development gap'

Current A coverage

Almost all of this material is very well-known to A centres from Unit 5 section C. There is less stress on the theoretical underpinnings in the new material and more on the variety of routes to economic growth and development but the rearrangement of material is relatively trivial.

Summary: A very considerable overlap with limited readjustment necessary.

LEVEL 5

Topic 6: The technological fix?

Technology and development

Humans increasingly depend on new technology, and access to technology is closely related to level of development. Just as development is distinctly uneven, so is the geography of technology. Many people have the expectation that technology will help them, and solve problems, whereas others lack access to technological innovation at even basic levels. The question of who should have access to technology, and at what price, is a key one.

Use of technology

Use of technology has costs as well as benefits, both social and environmental. These may be known, but in some cases are unforeseen. Technology can be used in a variety of ways, and obvious contrast is between large scale top-down mega-projects and small scale intermediate and more appropriate approaches. Technology may have the potential to solve some key geographical problems and issues, but is unlikely to be accessible to all, and the desirability of large-scale technological fixes needs to be assessed.

1. The geography of technology

Enquiry question: Why is there inequality in access to technology?

2. Technology and development

Enquiry question: How far does technology determine development and resource use?

3. Technology, environment and the future

Enquiry question: What is the role of technology in the management of the contested planet?

Current A coverage

Much of this is new material or, at least, a rearrangement of bits and pieces that are currently taught across Unit 5 in Sections A, B and C. Centres will be familiar with the ideas but unfamiliar with their arrangement under this heading.

Summary: Some 'new' and some refocused material here addressing key issues in the modern world.

LEVEL 3

Unit 4: Geographical Research

This offers six topics and students select ONE, probably after exploring several before embarking on detailed research. As well as linking elements of the other three units there are other explicit directions for exploring the synoptic context of these topics by identifying three broad initial questions for students to explore. The six topics overlap variably with current A coverage but obviously provide centres with a clear opportunity either to increase the level of overlap, by choosing Option 2 for example, or to explore new areas that may reflect centre interests, Option 4 for example.

For many A centres these options also provide the opportunity for examining physical processes in greater depth than currently allowed including the inclusion of new research material in either Option 1 or 2, neither of which are as prescriptive about content as the current specification.

Option 1: Tectonic activity and hazards

Tectonic activity

Tectonic activity generates a wide range of natural hazards. The fundamental cause of these is plate tectonics, and thus the hazards have a distinct geography, linked to different tectonic settings. Tectonics is a key landscape-forming process which produces distinctive landforms in active regions, ranging from minor surface features such as faults or scarps to vast rift valleys and shield volcanoes.

Tectonic hazards

Tectonic hazards generate significant risk to human populations and their possessions, related to their vulnerability and the magnitude and frequency of hazardous events. Risk varies due to many factors including level of economic development, preparedness and education. Hazard impacts may be short-term or long-term. People respond to hazard risk in a variety of ways, by for instance, attempting to modify the hazardous event, through vulnerability or loss. Response depends on knowledge, technology and the availability of financial resources.

1. Tectonic hazards and causes

Enquiry question: What are tectonic hazards and what causes them?

2. Tectonic hazard physical impacts

Enquiry question: What impact does tectonic activity have on landscapes and why does this impact vary?

3. Tectonic hazard human impacts

Enquiry question: What impacts do tectonic hazards have on people and how do these impacts vary?

4. Response to tectonic hazards

Enquiry question: How do people cope with tectonic hazards and what are the issues for the future?

Current A coverage

This is very familiar territory for A centres but given that it is currently taught at AS level whereas in this context it involves guided student research at A2 there are obvious changes in delivery and expected depth of understanding allowing the opportunity for a more profound exploration of tectonics than is currently possible.

LEVEL 5

Option 2: Cold environments – landscapes and change

Cold environments

Cold environments include glacial uplands, high latitude ice-bound regions and periglacial areas. The distribution of these regions has changed significantly during the Quaternary geological period, and continues to change today. Climate determines the location of cold environments, and climate cycles have influenced the location of cold environments in the past. Much of the landscape richness in the British Isles and elsewhere is a result of past and present geomorphological processes operating in cold environments; present day study of the landscape can reveal evidence of past processes, and the same processes can be found forming landscapes today.

Management and protection

Cold environments present humans with both challenges and opportunities, in the form of hazards and resources. It is increasingly recognised that cold environments are under threat from human actions and require management and protection.

1. Defining and locating cold environments

Enquiry question: What are cold environments and where are they found?

2. Climatic processes and their causes

Enquiry question: What are the climatic processes that cause cold environments and what environmental conditions result from these?

3. Distinctive landforms and landscapes

Enquiry question: How do geomorphological processes produce distinctive landscapes and landforms in cold environments?

4. Challenges and opportunities

Enquiry question: What challenges and opportunities exist in cold environments and what management issues might result from their use?

Current A coverage

Once again this is very familiar territory for A centres most of which teach Section B in Unit 4. Adjustments will need to be made to allow for the research element in this unit allowing the opportunity for a more profound exploration of cold environments than is currently possible.

LEVEL 5

Option 3: Life on the margins: the food supply problem

Life on the margins

Significant numbers of people live a life on the margin, in a situation of food insecurity. Others consume more than their fair share of global resources. This option explores this inequality, focusing on regions where food production is a continual challenge. The 'margins' may be traditional areas of famine, but also rapidly urbanising areas where food is scarce and malnutrition an ever present threat.

Food insecurity

The causes of food insecurity are complex, ranging from physical processes of land degradation and desertification, exacerbated by human over-exploitation, to population pressure and political processes. Increasing food supply represents a key challenge cemented with the Millennium Development Goals. However, often agreement does not exist on the best way to achieve this; options range from reforming trade systems to hi-tech farming, intermediate technology and organic farming.

1. Global and local feast or famine

Enquiry question: What are the characteristics of food supply and security?

2. The complex causes of food supply inequalities

Enquiry question: What has caused global inequalities in food supply and security?

3. Desertification and life at the margin of survival

Enquiry question: What is the role of desertification in threatening life at the margins?

4. The role of management in food supply and security

Enquiry question: How effective can management strategies be in sustaining life at the margins?

Current A coverage

This is largely unfamiliar academic territory within the current specification although some of the broader themes will have been addressed both in Unit 2 and in those centres that opt to teach Section B of Unit 5.

LEVEL 2

Option 4: The world of cultural diversity

Culture

Culture is a complex concept, with multiple meanings but universal importance to human populations. In many parts of the world consumption is the dominant, but not the only, culture. Culture varies spatially and has a distinct geography, with some areas being relatively homogenous while others offer greater diversity. Large urban areas often produce diversity, which is reflected in the population, services and built environment of cities. Attitudes to cultural diversity differ, both personal and political/national.

Cultural patterns

Globalisation is seen by some as a key process in driving culture towards a global model, and media TNCs and communications technology aid this process. However, the pattern is complex and localised cultures do survive and new cultures can still be generated. Culture, to some extent, determines our attitude to the wider environment in terms of consumption, conservation, exploitation and protection. Attitudes to the environment differ between cultures; however the dominance of today's consumer capitalism is difficult to resolve with pressing global environmental concerns.

1. Defining culture and identifying its value

Enquiry question: What is the nature and value of culture in terms of peoples and places?

2. The geography of culture

Enquiry question: How and why does culture vary spatially?

3. The impact of globalisation on cultural diversity

Enquiry question: How is globalisation impacting on culture?

4. Cultural attitudes to the environment

Enquiry question: How do cultural values impact on our relationship with the environment?

Current A coverage

This is largely unfamiliar academic territory within the current specification although some of the broader themes will have bee addressed both in Unit 2, Section C and in those centres that opt to teach Section C of Unit 5.

LEVEL 2

Option 5: Pollution and human health at risk

Pollution and human health

Human health is a key concern at scales ranging from personal to global. Personally health has a key impact on quality of life, but it also affects economic development at broader scales and poses key global challenges relating to the spread of disease. Health risk is strongly related to level of economic development, either in the form of transmissible disease or environmental pollution. The spread of risk follows geographical patterns and features. In modern societies, pollution is a key risk especially in countries where rapid economic development takes precedence over environmental and health concerns.

Risk

A wide range of strategies can be adopted to manage pollution and health; some problems are harder to manage than others and require long term strategies, economic and lifestyle changes. Increasingly management is international in nature, reflecting an interconnected world.

1. Defining the risks to human health

Enquiry question: What are the health risks?

2. The complex causes of health risk

Enquiry question: What are the causes of health risks?

3. Pollution and health risk

Enquiry question: What is the link between health risk and pollution?

4. Managing the health risk

Enquiry question: How can the impacts of health risk be managed?

Current A coverage

This is unfamiliar academic territory within the current specification although a few of the broader themes may have been addressed both in Unit 2, Sections A and B and in those centres that opt to teach Section B of Unit 5.

LEVEL 1

Option 6: Consuming the rural landscape – leisure and tourism

Consumption	Increasingly landscapes are undergoing a structural shift from production to consumption; in other words from primary production towards tourism and leisure. This shift affects rural landscapes of all types from the accessible rural-urban fringe to remote regions, increasingly, the locations of consumption are global and few areas remain untouched by leisure and tourism. This consumption puts pressure on often fragile rural landscapes, and represents a threat that requires careful management.
Reconciling the demands	Rural areas and landscapes can both benefit from increasing use for leisure and tourism, and can also be threatened by it. Reconciling the demands of consumers with the need to protect rural landscapes is a key challenge, which can be tackled in a wide variety of ways from preservation to ecotourism.

1. The growth of leisure and tourism landscapes

Enquiry question: What is the relationship between the growth of leisure and tourism and rural landscape use?

2. The significance and fragility of rural landscapes

Enquiry question: What is the significance of some rural landscapes used for leisure and tourism?

3. Impact on rural landscapes

Enquiry question: What impact does leisure and tourism have on rural landscapes?

4. Rural landscape management issues

Enquiry question: How can rural landscapes used for leisure and tourism be managed?

Current A coverage

This is largely unfamiliar academic territory within the current specification although some of the broader themes will have been addressed both in Unit 2 and in those centres that opt to teach Section B of Unit 5.

LEVEL 2