

# New A Level Geology

## H087 and H487 replacing 3884 and 7884

Information for OCR centres transferring to **new specifications for first teaching in September 2008**

This document maps the current A Level Geology specification to the new specification for first teaching in September 2008. It includes information on the changes, support available and an outline of the new specification. It is intended to help ease the transition for Heads of Department and Teachers involved in the teaching of Geology

The full specification is available online along with a short questionnaire enabling you to share your comments on the specification and help shape the materials developed to support it. For more information including answers to frequently asked questions visit [www.ocr.org.uk/14-19alevels](http://www.ocr.org.uk/14-19alevels)

**Current specification – mapping the changes**

**pages 2-3**

**Outline specification for first teaching September 2008**

**page 4**

**QCA have stipulated that:**

- Number of units required to achieve GCE in Geology remains at six
- Coursework is retained as controlled assessment
- Stretch and Challenge style questions to be introduced into A2 assessment



# Mapping the changes to the A Level Geology specification for first teaching September 2008

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Existing specification						
Current unit title	Unit code	What remains the same?	What is changing?	Why is it changing?	Guidance	
AS	<b>Global Tectonics and Geological Structures</b>	<b>2831</b> Mandatory 30% (AS) 15% (A Level) 1hr written exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structure of the Earth.</li> <li>• Earthquakes.</li> <li>• Continental drift and plate tectonics.</li> <li>• Geological Structures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of planetary geology and dating.</li> <li>• Less structural geology content.</li> <li>• All sections have more detail without increasing content.</li> <li>• New unit code F791.</li> </ul>		
	<b>The Rock Cycle – Processes and Products</b>	<b>2832</b> Mandatory 30% (AS) 15% (A Level) 1hr written exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rock Cycle.</li> <li>• Igneous processes and products.</li> <li>• Sedimentary processes and products.</li> <li>• Metamorphic processes and products.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrates 2832 with material from 2835 to make a cohesive unit eliminating repetition.</li> <li>• New unit code F792.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrating the processes and products of the rock cycle in one unit avoids any need for repetition.</li> </ul>	
AS	<b>Economic and Environmental Geology/Laboratory and Field Skills 1</b>	<b>2833</b>				
	<b>01 Economic and Environmental Geology</b>	Mandatory 20% (AS) 10% (A Level) 45min written exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Much the same areas of content but now an A2 unit.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moves to A2.</li> <li>• New unit code F794.</li> </ul>		
	<b>02 Laboratory and Field Skills 1</b>	Mandatory 20% (AS) 10% (A Level) Coursework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coursework requirement remains but under controlled assessment conditions.</li> <li>• Fieldwork encouraged.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current scheme is disappearing, to be replaced with new controlled assessment.</li> <li>• New unit code F793.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work to be undertaken in a supervised context. OCR to set tasks that teachers mark.</li> <li>• Fieldwork encouraged.</li> <li>• QCA requirements and the need to reduce the amount of assessment teachers have.</li> </ul>	
A2	<b>Palaeontology</b>	<b>2834</b> Mandatory 15% (A Level) 1.5hr written exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Much the same with additions of vertebrates and climate change and the deletion of some of the detailed morphology of the invertebrates.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dinosaur evolution.</li> <li>• Evolution of the Earth's atmosphere and palaeoclimatic changes.</li> <li>• New unit code F795.</li> </ul>		

Existing specification					
Current unit title	Unit code	What remains the same?	What is changing?	Why is it changing?	Guidance
A2 <b>Petrology</b>	<b>2835</b> Mandatory 15% (A Level) 1hr 35min written exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content similar.</li> <li>• Formation and identification of igneous, sedimentary and metamorphic rocks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part of Rocks -Processes and Products in AS.</li> <li>• Constructional and bulk materials, pegmatites and hydrothermal veins move to A2 unit 4.</li> <li>• Correlation of sedimentary sequences moves to A2 unit 5.</li> <li>• Phase diagrams and most minerals removed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To reduce repetition and create a single cohesive unit.</li> </ul>	
	<b>Geological Skills/Laboratory and Field Skills 2</b>	<b>2836</b>			
A2 <b>01 Geological Skills</b>	Mandatory 10% (A Level) 1hr 15min written exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using geological maps and photographs to interpret geological environments and situations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No synoptic paper.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction of assessment.</li> <li>• Synoptic content assessed mainly in F794 and some in F795.</li> </ul>	
	<b>02 Laboratory and Field Skills 2</b>	Mandatory 10% (A Level) Coursework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requirement to produce work based on student's own practical experience.</li> <li>• Coursework requirement remains but under controlled assessment conditions.</li> <li>• Fieldwork encouraged.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current scheme is disappearing, to be replaced with new controlled assessment.</li> <li>• New unit code F796.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work to be undertaken in a supervised context. OCR to set tasks that teachers mark.</li> <li>• Fieldwork encouraged.</li> <li>• QCA requirements and the need to reduce the amount of assessment teachers have.</li> </ul>

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For AS GCE all three units are mandatory. For Advanced GCE all six units are mandatory.



	New unit title	New unit code	Benefits to me and my learners	Support
AS	Global Tectonics	<b>F791</b> Mandatory 30% (AS) 15% (A Level) 1hr written exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specification contains all the detail that teachers will need.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Textbook from Heinemann written by OCR geology examiners.</li> <li>• INSET programme.</li> <li>• Schemes of Work for guidance.</li> <li>• Sample Assessment Materials.</li> </ul>
AS	Rocks – Processes and Products	<b>F792</b> Mandatory 50% (AS) 25% (A Level) 1hr 45min written exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specification contains all the detail that teachers will need.</li> <li>• An evidence-based cohesive unit that ties all the work together for igneous, sedimentary and metamorphic rocks.</li> </ul>	
AS	Geology Practical 1	<b>F793</b> Mandatory 20% (AS) 10% (A Level) Internal assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Centres choose one from three, OCR set, practical based tasks from each of two task types: Centre-based or fieldwork task and an OCR set Evaluative Task.</li> <li>• Centres access tasks and mark schemes from OCR secure website.</li> <li>• Carried out at a time convenient to the centre, under controlled conditions.</li> <li>• Assessed in the laboratory or the field.</li> </ul>	
A2	Environmental geology	<b>F794</b> Mandatory 15% (A Level) 1hr written exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specification contains all the detail that teachers will need.</li> <li>• Incorporates uses of geological materials from other units.</li> <li>• Considers the impact of environmental geology on the environment, sustainability and geoconservation.</li> <li>• Stretch and Challenge question types included.</li> <li>• Identification of minerals using a data table supplied.</li> </ul>	
A2	Evolution of Life, Earth and Climate	<b>F795</b> Mandatory 25% (A Level) 1hr 45min written exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specification contains all the detail that teachers will need.</li> <li>• Moves away from just learning morphology to discussion of the evolution of some fossil groups, the Earth's climate and climate change.</li> <li>• Stretch and Challenge question types included.</li> </ul>	
A2	Geology Practical 2	<b>F796</b> Mandatory 10% (A Level) Internal assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Centres choose one from three, OCR set, practical based tasks from each of two task types: Centre-based or fieldwork task and an OCR set Evaluative Task.</li> <li>• Centres access tasks and mark schemes from OCR secure website.</li> <li>• Carried out at a time convenient to the centre, under controlled conditions.</li> <li>• Assessed in the laboratory or the field.</li> </ul>	