

# Geography

## Syllabus outline

For examination in 2012 – 2015

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Cambridge  
**Pre-U**



UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE  
International Examinations

Excellence in education

Cambridge Pre-U is available in 28 subjects:

Art and Design	History
Art History	Italian
Biology	Latin
Business and Management	Literature in English
Chemistry	Mandarin Chinese
Classical Greek	Mathematics*
Classical Heritage	Music
Comparative Government and Politics	Philosophy and Theology
Drama and Theatre	Physics
Economics	Psychology
French*	Russian*
Further Mathematics*	Spanish*
Geography	Sports Science
German*	
Global Perspectives and Research	

*\*a one-year certified Short Course is also available.*

### Feedback from schools



- Increased focus and motivation in year 12 pupils
- Richer, more coherent educational experience
- Encourages wider reading
- More independent inquiry and learning
- Opportunity to develop and pursue own academic interests
- Greater scope for upper ability pupils to distinguish themselves
- More time and support available for lower ability pupils
- Greater maturity at examination time



## Cambridge Pre-U overview

Cambridge Pre-U is an exciting qualification for 16–19 year olds who want to go to university. It equips students with the knowledge and skills they need to make a success of their undergraduate studies:

- a solid and coherent grounding in specialist subjects at an appropriate level
- the ability to undertake independent and self-directed learning
- the ability to think laterally, critically and creatively and communicate effectively

Cambridge Pre-U Principal Subjects and Short Courses are stand-alone qualifications, recognised by universities and attracting a rewarding UCAS tariff. They are compatible with A Levels and may be taken in combination with them.

For Cambridge Pre-U Principal Subjects, students take all examination components at the end of a two-year programme of study, and we assess them at the full Cambridge Pre-U standard.

For Cambridge Pre-U Short Courses, students take all examination components at the end of a one-year programme of study. A Short Course grade does not contribute to a Principal Subject result. In this sense, a distinctive feature of Cambridge Pre-U is linearity.

### Common characteristics of Cambridge Pre-U syllabuses

- **Design:** focused on the development of high-level knowledge, understanding and skills to prepare for university and beyond, through extensive consultation with teachers, students and universities.
- **Stretch:** built into syllabus content (380 guided learning hours and challenging concepts), assessment (open-ended questions) and grading outcomes (finer differentiation at the top end).
- **Innovation:** new approaches to subjects, greater freedom in subject combination, new topics, new methods of delivery and new forms of assessment.
- **Progression in learning:** Cambridge Pre-U builds on prior knowledge gained at 14–16, where appropriate, and develops broad generic skills (independent study and research skills). Students are better prepared for undergraduate study.
- **Linearity:** assessment at the end of the course makes for greater coherence in teaching and learning.



# Cambridge Pre-U Geography

The Cambridge Pre-U Geography course aims to equip students with the skills required to make a success of their subsequent studies at university.

## Curriculum

Studying Cambridge Pre-U Geography involves:

- investigating the interaction of people with their environment
- understanding the processes and factors that shape that environment
- understanding how both the physical environment influences people and how people influence the physical environment
- recognising that these interactions create opportunities and problems, which require careful management
- understanding that management needs to be sustainable to maintain the environment for future generations
- developing the enquiry skills necessary to understand and explain these geographical issues

## Scheme of assessment

Students take all four components together at the end of the course in the same session:

Component	Component title	Duration	Weighting	Type of assessment
1	Geographical issues	2 hours 30 mins	40%	Written paper, externally set and marked
2	Global environments	1 hour 30 mins	20%	Written paper, externally set and marked
3	Global themes	1 hour 30 mins	20%	Written paper, externally set and marked
4	Research topic	1 hour 30 mins	20%	Written paper, externally set and marked



## Syllabus

There are four components: geographical issues, global environments, global themes and a research topic. Each component is assessed by a written examination.

In papers 1–3, students will be able to use examples and case studies from a range of scales and places. Where relevant, such exemplar material should include material from countries and areas at different levels of development.

### 1: Geographical issues

This component focuses on the study of geographical issues that pose a threat to human well-being, activity and life. Students must answer two questions from Section A, two questions from Section B and one question from Section C.

#### Section A

Tectonic hazards  
Hazardous weather  
Hydrological hazards

#### Section B

The geography of crime  
Health and disease  
Spatial inequality and poverty

**Section C** gives an opportunity for extended writing based on more than one of the issues studied.

### 2: Global environments

Students must answer questions on two topics, one from each section.

#### Section A

Arid and semi-arid environments  
Glacial and periglacial environments  
Coastal environments

#### Section B

Tropical environments

Temperate grassland and forest environments  
The atmospheric environment

### 3: Global themes

Students must answer questions on two topics, one from each section.

#### Section A

Migration and urban change  
Trade, debt and aid  
The world of work

#### Section B

Energy and mineral resources  
The provision of food  
Tourism spaces

### 4: Research topic

In preparation for this written examination students must carry out a research investigation involving fieldwork, as well as secondary research. There are three prescribed topics, from which students select one. For example, for examination in 2013 the topics are:

Microclimates  
Conservation  
Central business districts

In the examination, students must answer three questions on their chosen research topic: one data response, one on the wider topic, and one on their investigation.

“ Five terms ‘just to teach the geography’ to quote the Chief Examiner. Doesn’t that sound good? Cambridge Pre-U is designed to be cumulative and holistic; the topics I teach take pupils up a spiral of knowledge over two years. ”

Peter Price, Head of Geography, Charterhouse

## Reporting of achievement

Achievement is reported on a scale of nine grades: Distinction 1, 2 and 3, Merit 1, 2 and 3 and Pass 1, 2 and 3. The Distinction 3 standard is aligned to that of Grade A and the Pass 3 is aligned to that of Grade E at A Level. Distinction 1 reports achievement above the new A\* grade. The intention is to differentiate more finely and extend reporting at the top end, while keeping the grading scale accessible to the full range of ability currently achieving passes at A Level.

## UCAS tariff points

The table shows the UCAS tariff awarded to each Cambridge Pre-U Principal Subject grade and how this compares with the tariff for A Level.

The tariff reflects the additional content within each syllabus and the linear assessment (terminal examinations at full Cambridge Pre-U standard).

Universities which normally ask for three A grades at A Level typically make Cambridge Pre-U offers involving a combination of Distinction 3 and Merit 1. Other offers may include asking for a Merit 2 in place of a B, Merit 3 or Pass 1 for a C, Pass 2 for a D and Pass 3 for an E.

Cambridge Pre-U band	Cambridge Pre-U grade	Cambridge Pre-U Principal Subject UCAS tariff	Equivalent A Level UCAS tariff	Short Course UCAS tariff
Distinction	D1	tbc	n/a	tbc
	D2	145	(A*) 140	tbc
	D3	130	(A) 120	60
Merit	M1	115		53
	M2	101	(B) 100	46
	M3	87		39
Pass	P1	73		32
	P2	59		26
	P3	46	(E) 40	20

Cambridge Pre-U is recognised by all UK universities and many universities abroad, including all US Ivy League universities. For more details, please go to [www.cie.org.uk/qualifications/recognition](http://www.cie.org.uk/qualifications/recognition).

## Support and resources for teachers

We offer a programme of free Cambridge Pre-U INSET training for teachers accompanied by online support materials including syllabuses, specimen/past papers, mark schemes and example candidate responses.

A free Teacher Guide expands on each syllabus, to help teachers understand what students are expected to know.

It is written by a teacher for teachers and suggests for each topic:

- a checklist of what to cover with students
- resources, both paper and web based
- additional extension/'stretch and challenge' areas
- further teaching and learning opportunities.

**Learn more!** For more information on Cambridge Pre-U visit [www.cie.org.uk/cambridgepreu](http://www.cie.org.uk/cambridgepreu) or contact Customer Services on +44 (0)1223 553554 or email [international@cie.org.uk](mailto:international@cie.org.uk)



University of Cambridge International Examinations  
1 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB1 2EU, United Kingdom  
Tel: +44 1223 553554 Fax: +44 1223 553558  
international@cie.org.uk www.cie.org.uk

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