

# Geography Progression Guide - Moving from GCSE to GCE and beyond

## Introduction and content

This guide has been designed for centres who are delivering Edexcel's GCSE courses (Specification A or Specification B Geography) and progressing students to Edexcel's GCE 2008 qualification. It is organised into the following sections:

1. Practical considerations
2. Content mapping
3. Approaches to teaching and learning
4. Skills and techniques
5. Language and terminology
6. Useful resources
7. Beyond GCE

The guide outlines the adjustment required to make the transition from GCSE to GCE a successful one. It outlines some of the linkages between GCE and GCSE and also some of the key differences that need to be considered by centres.

## 1. Practical considerations

### GCE without GCSE?

The GCE specification was written with an awareness that in many centres an increasing number of students were requesting GCE Geography without having studied the subject at GCSE level. In many centres GCSE blocking means the subject is 'dropped', but students later decide they are geographers after all.

This is an issue wholly for centre policy. However, many candidates will have touched on many GCE topics at KS3 Geography and in GCSE Science. In addition knowledge of global issues from the media and other sources is often good. Many centres find non-GCSE candidates are successful at GCE level. Some centres require such candidates to have gained BB for Dual Award Science and / or a grade C or B in Maths, English or both. Candidates requesting GCE without GCSE are often well motivated. Some centres have a 'trial-period' policy of 3 weeks at the start of the GCE course.

The most common barrier to success for such candidates is the 'language of geography'. This might be addressed by the careful compilation of glossaries and / or students completing some GCSE exam questions at the beginning of their GCE course to 'refresh' their geographical language from KS3.

### Fieldwork

Fieldwork is a required part of the Controlled Assessment (coursework) at GCSE (Unit 4 in both Spec A and Spec B). There is a choice of fieldwork tasks and locations e.g. coasts, river, urban or rural locations. At GCE there is no coursework, but fieldwork is required part of Unit 2 either at a coastal location or river, and in both urban and rural contexts. Centres should consider:

- That 1-2 days fieldwork will need to be undertaken at GCSE, and a further 2-3 days at GCE AS level.
- Whether topics chosen at GCSE for fieldwork should be similar, of different, to those chosen at GCSE.
- Whether fieldwork for GCE and GCSE should be undertaken at the same, or different, locations.
- The timing of fieldwork during the year.

## 2. Content mapping

Both the GCSE and GCE Geography courses contain compulsory (core) content and optional content within their 4 Units:

Figure 1: Core and Option units

	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4
GCSE Spec A	Core	Options	Options	Choice of topic
GCSE Spec B	Core and options	Core and Options	Core	Choice of topic
GCE	Core	Options	Core	Options

This means there is considerable flexibility in topic choice at both GCSE and GCE and centres are at liberty to devise a **four year course** that meets their own requirements. There are some key decisions to be made:

- GCSE content could be avoided at GCE i.e. to minimise repetition
- The GCE course could be designed to build on GCSE by revisiting some topics covered at GCSE, albeit in a different way and at greater depth.
- A mixed approach could be taken, reinforcing some GCSE topics whilst avoiding others to reduce repetition.

Each of the above approaches is equally acceptable. It would be advisable to have this discussion with all members of staff and possibly with students. Some students feel more secure when they are covering familiar ground; others may be happier with entirely new content. The tables below map the two GCSE courses against the GCE course to highlight areas where there is significant linkage.

Figure 2: the GCE Specification in Brief

GCE AS and A2	
<b>Unit 1 Global Challenges (AS)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Going Global</li> <li>• World at Risk</li> </ul>	<b>Unit 2 Geographical Research (AS)</b> Either <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crowded Coasts or</li> <li>• Extreme Weather</li> </ul> Either <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rebranding Places or</li> <li>• Unequal spaces</li> </ul>
<b>Unit 3 Contested Planet (A2)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Energy Security</li> <li>• Water Conflicts</li> <li>• Biodiversity under Threat</li> <li>• Superpower Geographies</li> <li>• Bridging the Development Gap</li> </ul>	<b>Unit 4 Geographical Research (A2)</b> ONE of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tectonic hazards</li> <li>• Cold Environments</li> <li>• Life on the Margins</li> <li>• Pollution and Human Health</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technological Fix?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural Diversity</li> <li>• Consuming the Rural landscape</li> </ul>
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The GCE specification is shown above for reference (Figure 2).

It is worth noting that GCSE Specification was designed to feed into the GCE 2008 specification and provide a four year Geography course for centres and candidates.

Consequently there are stronger and more structured linkages between GCSE Spec B and the GCE course. Centres wishing to stress the differences between Spec B and GCE might wish to consider the Rivers and Oceans options in Unit 1, and Countryside and Development options in Unit 2 at GCSE.

Figure 3: GCSE Spec A to GCE linkages

GCSE Spec A	Linkages to GCE AS and A2
<b>Unit 1 Geographical Skills and Challenges</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Geographical Skills</li> <li>• Challenges for the Planet</li> </ul>	Geographical Skills supports all aspects of A2 Geography, particularly the interpretation of geographical data in an examination setting. OS map work will support Fieldwork at AS level. Unit 1, climate change and Units 1 and 3, sustainable development.
<b>Unit 2 The Natural Environment ONE of:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coastal landscapes</li> <li>• River landscapes</li> <li>• Glaciated landscapes</li> <li>• Tectonic Landscapes</li> <li>• EITHER A wasteful world</li> <li>• OR A watery world</li> </ul>	Unit 2, Crowded Coasts  Unit 4, Cold Environments option Unit 1, global distribution of hazards and Unit 4, Tectonic Hazards option Unit 4, Pollution and Human Health and general environmental issues and ideas Unit 3, Water Conflicts
<b>Unit 3 The Human Environment ONE of:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic Change</li> <li>• Farming and Countryside</li> <li>• Settlement Change</li> <li>• Population Change</li> <li>• EITHER A moving world</li> <li>• OR A tourist's world</li> </ul>	Unit 1, globalisation Some linkage to Unit 2 human options Some linkage to Unit 2 human options  Unit 1, migration Unit 4, Consuming the rural landscape option
<b>Unit 4 Investigating Geography ONE controlled assessment task on either:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coasts</li> <li>• Contemporary</li> <li>• Countryside</li> <li>• Environmental</li> <li>• Rivers</li> <li>• Tourism</li> <li>• Transport</li> </ul>	Unit 2 Crowded Coasts  Unit 2 Human Options  Limited linkage to Unit 2, Extreme Weather Unit 4, Consuming the rural landscape option

• Urban Areas	Unit 2 Human Options
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With Spec A at GCSE it is relatively easy, based on option choices and fieldwork choices, to devise a centre specific course which either links strongly to GCE in terms of topics covered, or is very different to GCE in terms of topics. A 'middle ground' is also possible.

Figure 4: GCSE Spec B to GCE linkages

GCSE Spec B	Linkages to GCE AS and A2
<b>Unit 1 Dynamic Planet</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restless Earth</li> <li>Climate and Change</li> <li>Battle for the Biosphere</li> <li>Water World</li> <li>EITHER Coastal Change</li> <li>OR River Processes</li> <li>EITHER Oceans on the Edge</li> <li>OR Extreme Climates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unit 1 World at Risk (hazard distribution) and Unit 4 Tectonic Hazards option</li> <li>Unit 1 World at Risk (climate change)</li> <li>Unit 3 Biodiversity Under Threat</li> <li>Unit 3 Water Conflicts</li> <li>Unit 2 Crowded Coasts option</li> <li>Unit 2 Extreme Weather / Unit 4 Life on the Margins option</li> </ul>
<b>Unit 2 People and the Planet</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Population Dynamics</li> <li>Consuming Resources</li> <li>Living Spaces</li> <li>Making a living</li> <li>EITHER Changing Cities</li> <li>OR Changing Countryside</li> <li>EITHER Development Dilemmas</li> <li>OR World at Work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unit 1 Migration</li> <li>Unit 1 Going Global and Unit 3 Contested Planet, in general terms</li> <li>Useful foundation for Unit 1 / 2</li> <li>Useful foundation for Unit 1 / 2</li> <li>Unit 1 World Cities / Unit 2 Human options</li> <li>Unit 2 Human options</li> <li>Unit 3 Bridging the Development Gap</li> <li>Unit 1 Globalisation</li> </ul>
<b>Unit 3 Making Geographical Decisions</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pressures / conflicts</li> <li>Players</li> <li>Options</li> <li>Sustainable development</li> <li>Environmental issues</li> </ul>	<p>A2 Unit 3 is assessed partly by a pre-release resources bases issues analysis; the skills developed in GCSE Unit 3 feed directly into the skills required for the Issues Analysis at A2 level. Environmental issues, sustainability issues and the role of players are key to A2 Unit 3.</p>
<b>Unit 4 Researching Geography</b>	
<b>ONE controlled assessment task on either:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coastal environments</li> <li>Rural / Countryside</li> <li>River environments</li> <li>Town / City</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unit 2 Crowded Coasts field work and research.</li> <li>Unit 2 Rebranding places / Unequal Spaces fieldwork and research</li> <li>Limited linkage to Unit 2 extreme weather</li> <li>Unit 2 Rebranding places / Unequal Spaces</li> </ul>

fieldwork and research

GCSE spec B and GCE share the idea of decision making and issues analysis. At GCSE level the focus is on examining an issue in depth within Unit 3, considering the views of different players and the costs and benefits of different options. These skills are then taken forward to GCE Issues Analysis where the topics and content are more difficult but the fundamental skills are similar.

### 3. Approaches to teaching and learning

#### Assessment Objectives

Figure 5 shows the Assessment Objectives for GCSE and GCE side by side for comparison purposes. At GCE there is more emphasis on process understanding in AO1. In AO2 at GCE the stress is very much on analysis, interpretation and evaluation whereas at GCSE the focus is more on application. It is worth noting that AO3 is mostly assessed via the controlled assessment at GCSE whereas at GCE is assessed via Unit 2 and the Issues Analysis component of Unit 3.

Figure 5: AOs and weightings

GCSE (B)	GCE
<b>AO1:</b> Recall, select and communicate their knowledge and understanding of places, environments and concepts. (30%)	<b>AO1:</b> Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the content, concepts and processes. (50%)
<b>AO2:</b> Apply their knowledge and understanding in familiar and unfamiliar contexts. (34%)	<b>AO2:</b> Analyse, interpret and evaluate geographical information, issues and viewpoints and apply understanding in unfamiliar contexts. (25%)
<b>AO3:</b> Select and use a variety of skills, techniques and technologies to investigate, analyse and evaluate questions and issues. (36%)	<b>AO3:</b> Select and use a variety of methods, skills and techniques (including the use of new technologies) to investigate questions and issues, reach conclusions and communicate findings. (25%)

#### GCSE Foundation candidates

Candidates who have gained a 'C' grade at Foundation level at GCSE can be successful at GCE level especially if they are well motivated. These students should be made aware that there is a step up from GCSE level, especially in terms of the complexity of language and resources encountered in examinations. Inevitably some students will require additional support in terms of:

- Interpretation of exam questions, and understanding examination language and style.
- Geographical terminology and its use; keeping glossaries and playing word games in class will help students use terminology with confidence and precision

Less able candidates will benefit from clear target setting and regular contact with assessment materials, both in class and for homework.

#### The A\* and Stretch and Challenge

The A\* for GCE will be awarded first in summer 2010. To achieve an A\* a candidate is required to:

*Achieve a grade A overall for the A level. This can also be described as achieving 80% of the total uniform marks AND achieve 90% of the combined uniform mark total for the A2 units.*

In order to achieve 90% of the combined uniform marks for A2, candidates will need to achieve the top level of the mark scheme in Unit 3 and Unit 4. This means directly addressing the specific command word in the question (e.g. 'assess', 'evaluate') and ensuring their answers meet requirements in terms of range, balance, use of examples and quality of written communication. An example of a Level 4 mark band for a question from Unit 3, Contested Planet is shown in Figure 6:

**Figure 6: An example of A2 Level 4 band**

Level 4	13 - 15	Carefully structured. Genuine evaluation of a range of threats; provides an overview of balance of threats for named areas; detailed real world exemplification. Judgements present. Descriptive language is well employed and precise. Explanations are always clear. Geographical terminology is used with accuracy. Grammar, punctuation and spelling errors are very rare.
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Notice the demands of the candidate in terms of:

- Structure i.e. a logically organised, coherent answer.
- Evaluation i.e. the ability to weigh up different arguments and form a supported view
- Balance i.e. not a one sided view
- Exemplification i.e. detailed use of relevant examples
- QWC accuracy

Wider reading is essential for the candidate aiming for an A\*.

### Research skills

Perhaps the most significant step up from GCSE to GCE is the expectation that students will undertake their own research and engage in independent learning. This approach key to A2 Unit 4, Geographical Research. In some centres students will be studying their own choice of topic and the teacher (s), while having some teaching input, will have more of a facilitating role.

For many candidates research skills and independent learning skills need to be taught. A number of centres have successfully used the time in June and July at the end of the AS year to focus on research skills, prior to starting the A2 content. Areas that might be focused on include:

- Exploring departmental and resource centre / library resources, to recognise that books, journals, magazines, videos, DVDS etc could all be used as part of research. Recognising the limitations of some resources in terms of their age, relevance and accuracy.
- Getting the best out of the internet; finding useful sites, recognising sites which are of little value or are heavily bias
- Note taking; especially condensing material into a digestible form for essay writing or revision purposes
- Reading for meaning; recognising bias
- Referencing and sourcing (a requirement in the Unit 4 exam)

### Examination demands

Moving from GCSE to GCE involves a change to the length of exams and the style of exam questions. These changes are summarised in Figure 7:

Figure 7: GCE and GCSE exams compared

	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4
GCSE A	1 hour Short questions 1-4 marks plus some extended writing up to 6 marks. QWC in extended questions.	1 hour Short 1-4 mark questions, with some 6 mark extended writing. QWC in Section B	1 hour Short 1-4 mark questions, with some 6 mark extended writing. QWC in Section B	Controlled Assessment
GCSE B	1 hour Short questions 1-4 marks, extended writing sections B and C up to 7 marks QWC Sections B and C	1 hour Short questions 1-4 marks, extended writing sections B and C up to 7 marks QWC Sections B and C	1 hour Short questions and extended writing. QWC in selected questions	Controlled Assessment
GCE	1 ½ hours Section A short questions up to 5 marks Section B 25 mark essay QWC Section B only	1 ¼ hours Extended writing questions of 10 and 15 marks QWC all	2 ½ hours Section A 25 mark essay style questions Section B extended writing Issues Analysis QWC all	1 ½ hours One essay style question, written as a structured report. QWC all

The longer exam papers and greater use of extended writing means candidates must develop their writing skills as they move from GCSE to GCE. Students will find the format of GCE Unit 1, Section A similar to what they were used to at GCSE but other exam questions will feel very different.

Significant practice, using past papers and mark schemes, will help students understand the demands of GCE. Some of this practice should be under timed conditions. Peer marking and use of GCE examiners reports (which contain examples of 'real' students responses) are both very useful.

GCE examiners reports can be found here:

<http://www.edexcel.com/quals/gce/gce08/geography/Pages/default.aspx>

## 4. Skills and techniques

### Map skills

Cartographic skills are required at GCSE and GCE. On GCSE Spec A they form a specific part of Unit 1 and an O.S. Map extract is one of the exam resources students are required to use. O.S. maps skills are not specifically stated with GCSE Spec B, however, they should be

integrated into teaching as students are likely to use O.S. maps (or similar maps for centres based abroad) as part of their controlled assessment and they are useful when studying a whole range of topics. Similarly, an O.S. map is not likely to appear as a GCE examination resource but the expectation is that students can use and interpret a range of different types of map, including O.S. maps. They should be used as a secondary data source for Unit 2.

Maps commonly appear as examination resources. At GCE level world maps are common, as both Unit 1 and Unit 3 have a global focus. Many students stumble when asked to describe and explain patterns on world maps partly because they lack the necessary knowledge of place. There is a place for integrating 'old fashioned' learning of places into both GCSE and GCE.

### Interpretive skills

Data stimulus and data response resources form part of most GCE and GCSE exams. Candidates at both levels will be faced with a wide variety of geographical data which they must interpret. This will be in the form of:

- Maps
- Tables of data
- Graphs
- Photographs
- Diagrams
- Cartoons
- Text

The types of geographical data used at GCE and GCSE are actually very similar but, inevitably, the complexity of the data is greater at AS level and A2 level. Rapid, precise interpretation of geographical data is a skill that should be integrated into teaching as much as possible as it will help students at exam time.

### Fieldwork skills

Fieldwork skills development is essential at GCSE as part of the controlled assessment. At GCE fieldwork and research skills are 'freed' from the constraints of coursework. At GCE, ideally, students should be given the role of choosing specific locations for data collection and of designing data collection methods. This can build on their experience from GCSE. Unusual and innovative ways of collecting data and information are to be encouraged at GCE, as long as students can justify their choice or methods are prepared to be critical and reflect on their success or otherwise.

### GIS

GIS forms part of the Subject Criteria for GCSE and GCE. GIS should be introduced at GCSE level and basic variants such as Google Maps and Google Earth should be used. At GCE students should be familiar enough with GIS to use it as a basis for planning some of their own fieldwork and research for Unit 2.

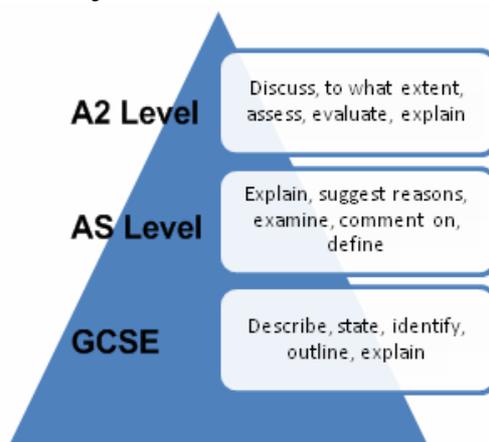
## 5. Language and terminology

### Command words

A key difference between GCSE and GCE is the use of examination command words. This reflects the higher level skills which are assessed at AS and A2 level compared to GCSE.

Figure 8, which is illustrative only, shows how command words progress from GCSE, to AS then A2. Many good GCE students struggle with the difference between 'describe' and 'explain', so it is well worth spending time in class on command word interpretation. Past papers, sample assessment materials and examiners reports are all sources of examples of command word use. All are available at [www.edexcel.com](http://www.edexcel.com).

Figure 8: Command word hierarchy



### Key Words

A common barrier to success at GCE level is a failure to address certain key words in questions. Often these are very commonly used words but they have a specific meaning in a geographical context. Examples are:

- Causes
- Consequences
- Conflicts
- Processes
- Factors

As well as focussing on command words, it is worth spending time to build student understanding of these key words.

### Country classification

Different country classification systems are used at GCSE and GCE levels. GCSE Spec A uses, broadly, the World Bank income classification (see Figure 9). GCSE Spec B use the terms 'developed' and 'developing' country and within this is an expectation that students will be familiar with MDC/ NIC /LEDC. GCE student's needs to be aware of some additional groupings (see Figure 9). It is always more important that students categorise a country correctly, than it is to use the specification specific groupings. For instance a GCE student would gain credit for stating the UK was a HIC, or even other variants such as MDC or EMDC.

**Figure 9: Classifying countries**

GCSE Specification A	GCSE Specification B And GCE		Additional GCE classification	North-South divide
High Income Country (HIC)	Developed	More Economically Developed Country (MEDC)	G8 Countries	" North "
			OECD Countries	
Middle Income Country (MIC)	Developing	Newly Industrialised Country (NIC)		" South "
Low Income Country (LIC)		Less Economically Developed Country (LEDC)	Least Developed Country (LDC)	

## 6. Useful resources

Below area a range of resources that are available to support both GCSE and GCE. They include textbooks, student unit guides, teacher's guides and digital resources. At GCSE endorsed textbooks and other resources are published for Spec A and B by Edexcel (<http://www.edexcel.com/resources/Pages/home.aspx>) and for Spec B by Oxford University Press (<http://ukcatalogue.oup.com/>).

At GCE level endorsed textbooks and other resources are published by Edexcel, OUP and Philip Allan (<http://www.philipallan.co.uk/>)

### Textbooks for GCSE

- Edexcel GCSE Geography Specification B Student Book, by Nigel Yates, Andrew Palmer, Phil Wood, and David Flint (Edexcel).
- Edexcel GCSE Geography Specification A Student Book, by Nigel Yates, Andrew Palmer, Mike Witherick, and Phil Wood (Edexcel)
- GCSE Geography for Edexcel B Students' Book by, Bob Digby, Dave Holmes, Sue Warn, and Cameron Dunn (OUP)

### Other GCSE Resources

- Edexcel GCSE Geography A Teacher Guide: A by Nigel Yates, Andrew Palmer, Mike Witherick, and Phil Wood (Edexcel)
- Edexcel GCSE Geography B Teacher Guide: B by Nigel Yates, Andrew Palmer, Mike Witherick, and Phil Wood (Edexcel)
- Tomorrow's Geography for Edexcel GCSE Specification A (Teachers Guide) by Mike Harcourt and Steph Warren (Edexcel)
- GCSE Geography for Edexcel B Teacher's Handbook by Bob Digby et al (OUP)
- Wideworld, GCSE student magazine published by Philip Allan [www.philipallan.co.uk](http://www.philipallan.co.uk)
- Topic Eye GCSE level magazine style resources published by Cross Academe [www.crossacademe.co.uk](http://www.crossacademe.co.uk)

### Textbooks for GCE

- Edexcel AS Geography: Student Book and Student CD-ROM by Viv Pointon, Steph Warren, and Peter Byrne (Edexcel)

- **Edexcel A2 Geography: Student Book** by Peter Byrne, Sally Garrington, Garrett Nagle, and Viv Pointon (Edexcel)
- **Edexcel AS Geography Textbook** by Sue Warn, Cameron Dunn, Simon Oakes, and Bob Hordern (Philip Allan)
- **Edexcel A2 Geography: Textbook** by Sue Warn, Cameron Dunn, Nigel Yates, and Simon Oakes (Philip Allan)
- **AS Geography for Edexcel Students' Book** by Bob Digby, Russell Chapman, Anna King, and Catherine Hurst (OUP)
- **A2 Geography For Edexcel Students' Book** by Bob Digby, Catherine Hurst, Russell Chapman, and Dan Cowling (OUP)
- **Edexcel AS Geography: Unit 2: Geographical Investigations, Student Unit Guide** by David Holmes and Bob Hordern (Philip Allan)
- **Edexcel AS Geography: Unit 1: Global Challenges, Student Unit Guide** by Sue Warn and Cameron Dunn (Philip Allan)
- **Edexcel A2 Geography: Unit 3: Contested Planet, Student Unit Guide**, by Sue Warn and Cameron Dunn (Philip Allan)
- **Edexcel A2 Geography: Unit 4: Geographical Research, Student Unit Guide (Student Unit Guides)** by Dave Holmes and Kim Adams (Philip Allan)
- **Contemporary Case Studies** book series published by Philip Allan

#### Other GCE Resources

- **Edexcel Geography AS ActiveTeach Pack** by Viv Pointon, Steph Warren, and Peter Byrne (CD-ROM, Edexcel)
- **Edexcel A2 Geography Active Teach Pack** by Peter Byrne, Viv Pointon, Mr Paul Guinness, and Sally Garrington (CD-ROM, Edexcel)
- **Edexcel A2 Geography: Teacher Guide** by Sue Warn, Cameron Dunn, Nigel Yates, and Simon Oakes (Philip Allan)
- **Edexcel AS Geography: Teacher Guide** by Sue Warn, Cameron Dunn, Simon Oakes, and Bob Hordern (Philip Allan)
- **AS Geography for Edexcel Activities & Planning OxBlox CD-ROM: Activities and Planning OxBlox CD-ROM** by Bob Digby (OUP)
- **AS Geography for Edexcel Teacher's Handbook** by Bob Digby and Catherine Hurst (OUP)
- **A2 Geography for Edexcel Teacher's Book** by Bob Digby and Catherine Hurst (OUP)
- **Geography Review**, A-level student magazine published by Philip Allan [www.philipallan.co.uk](http://www.philipallan.co.uk)
- **Geofactsheets**, A-level resources published by Curriculum Press [www.curriculum-press.co.uk/](http://www.curriculum-press.co.uk/)
- **Topic Eye** A-level magazine style resources published by Cross Academe [www.crossacademe.co.uk](http://www.crossacademe.co.uk)
- **Geofiles**, A-level geography resources published by Nelson Thornes <http://www.nelsonthornes.com/wps/portal/geofile>

#### 7. Beyond GCE

Many students consider Geography, or related courses, beyond A-level when they apply to Higher Education. The number and variety of different courses which relate to Geography is

very large indeed. Below is a brief (i.e. not comprehensive, please see [www.ucas.ac.uk](http://www.ucas.ac.uk)) guide to areas of Higher Education students interested in Geography might want to consider.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Geography</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Geography</li> <li>• Physical Geography</li> <li>• Human Geography</li> </ul>	<p>There are a very large number of general Geography course in Higher Education. Often universities offer the option of physical or human geography. Alternatively geography could be part of a Joint Honours or Combined Honours course.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Specialisms</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental Geography</li> <li>• Social Geography</li> <li>• Urban Geography</li> <li>• Regional Geography</li> <li>• Biogeography</li> <li>• Coastal management</li> </ul>	<p>Many HE courses allow for specialisation in an area of Geography, often one that was studied at GCE level. Such courses allow students to study areas which particularly interest them. Some may have more specific entry requirements than more general geography courses.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>GIS</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Geographical Information Systems</li> <li>• Geomatics</li> <li>• Surveying and Mapping Science</li> </ul>	<p>GIS and related courses are a growth area; they involve digital mapping and are often applied courses.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Environment</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental Science</li> <li>• Pollution Control</li> <li>• Conservation</li> </ul>	<p>There is a large range of courses relating to environmental issues and conservation.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Geological</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Geology</li> <li>• Earth Sciences</li> <li>• Geoscience</li> <li>• Geophysics</li> </ul>	<p>Geological / Earth Science courses are for those who enjoy physical geography and have a leaning towards science; they often require one or more science A-levels.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Weather and Climate</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meteorology</li> <li>• Climate Science</li> </ul>	<p>The number of courses available in this area is relatively small, and often oceanography is part of the course. Science A-levels are generally required.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Planning</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town and Country Planning</li> <li>• Rural / Countryside Planning</li> <li>• Transport Planning</li> </ul>	<p>Making locational decisions is key to planning, and there are a large number of planning courses some of which specialise in different types of geographical locations.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Development</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International Development</li> <li>• Development Studies</li> <li>• Regional Studies</li> <li>• Rural Development</li> <li>• Sustainable Development</li> </ul>	<p>Development is about improving peoples lives, and is an area of Geography that appeals to many students who have studied aspects of it at GCE. A wide range of courses are offered at HE level, some of which focus on the developing world.</p>

Additional Royal Geographical Society resources on progression and careers can be found at: <http://www.rgs.org/OurWork/Schools/CareersAndFurtherStudy/Careers+and+further+study.htm>