

WHY STUDY GEOGRAPHY AT A LEVEL?

Geography provides a great opportunity to study our world.

Perhaps because Geography is inherently multidisciplinary in a world that increasingly values people who have the skills needed to work across the physical and social sciences.

It was reported in the Guardian in 2015 that:

“geographers are eminently employable, which is why, according to the latest information from the Higher Education Careers Services Unit, only 5.8% of geography graduates were still job-hunting six months after they graduated, against an average of 7.3%.”

Geography has also been defined amongst the key 'facilitating' subjects in a guide compiled by the Russell Group (20 leading UK universities).

At Bootham we follow the AQA specification which balances both Physical and Human aspects of the subject. Geography can be a vocational subject but also combines well with other subjects, both arts and sciences.

Studying Geography develops many skills such as:

- Problem solving
- Numeracy and literacy
- Analytical skills
- Social and environmental awareness
- Spatial awareness
- Team work
- Self-management

Geography at Bootham is delivered in two well-resourced classrooms by three enthusiastic and dedicated teachers, Liz Brown, Anne Partridge .

Going places

We plan to take a field trip for at least 4 days in the Spring term of College One, this might be to Snowdonia or the Cranedale Centre near Malton depending on which options we teach. We also take a one day field trip to the East End of London in the autumn term and carry out lots of local field work in York. These trips provide a wonderful opportunity for students to learn Geography in a setting completely different to our school environment and enables them to collect data for their independent investigation, which contributes 20% to their final A2 grade.

Going deeper!

At Bootham we host the four annual lectures and the Sixth Form Conference for the York Branch of the Geographical Association. These provide our students with a glimpse of life at University and open their eyes to the wider world of Geography.

COURSE CONTENT

The course will be assessed by two examinations taken at the end of College 2: one Physical Geography and one Human Geography worth 40 % each and the independent investigation worth 20%.

PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY

Section A: Water and carbon cycles

Section B: Either hot desert environments and their margins **or** coastal systems and landscapes **or** **Glacial systems and landscapes**

Section C: Either Hazards **or** **Ecosystems under stress**

How it's assessed

- Written exam: 2 hours 30 minutes
- 120 marks
- 40% of A-level

Questions

- Section A: answer all questions (36 marks)
- Section B: answer either question 2 or question 3 Or question 4 (36marks)
- Section C: answer either question 5 or question 6 (48 marks)
- Question types: short answer, levels of response and extended prose

HUMAN GEOGRAPHY

Section A: Global systems and global governance

Section B: Changing places

Section C: Either **Contemporary Urban Environments** or population and the environment **or** resource security

How it's assessed

- Written exam: 2 hours 30 minutes
- 120 marks
- 40% of A-level

Questions

- Section A: answer all questions (36marks)
- Section B: answer all questions (36 marks)
- Section C: answer either question 3 or question 4 or question 5 (48 marks)
- Question types: short answer, levels of response, extended prose

Modules have been chosen to balance staff specialisms with fieldwork opportunities and attempt to give students the broadest and most rewarding selection of topics trying to avoid repeating those delivered at GCSE Level. The chosen options are in bold and the option in Section C on the Physical course will vary depending on our course work location.

Where next?

In the last two years we have seen a good uptake of Geography and Environmental Science Degrees amongst our College Two leavers. Before they leave we ask them to evaluate their experience of Geography and offer advice to students contemplating taking Geography at AS/A2 level. Here are some of their comments....

- I enjoyed learning about cold environments; it was taught well which made it more enjoyable.
- I enjoyed the friendly relaxed lesson atmosphere.
- Do Prep on time. You may get Geographer of the month for it too!
- You must be able to work otherwise it will not be enjoyable.
- Keep your folder up to date, don't think I'll do it later, because it's easy to lose track.
- Be prepared for the amount of Prep but lessons are always nice and fun.
- Keep a folder with different case studies for each topic, very useful for revision!
- Get a Geography dictionary.
- Keep on top of everything.
- Do your Prep!! Read 'Geography Review' and 'Geographical' magazines.
- Make good notes during lessons.
- Know your case studies.
- Do homework, or at least what you can. Even if you only do bullet points it helps so much.

Geography is a challenging and vibrant subject that helps equip our young citizens for the future. If you have any queries about Geography as an option please contact Liz Brown or Anne Partridge.

Liz Brown
November 2019