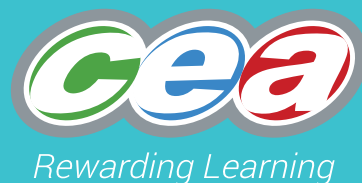


GCSE



# CCEA GCSE Specification in Geography

Version 3: 15 June 2017

For first teaching from September 2017

For first assessment in Summer 2018

For first award in Summer 2019

Subject Code: 3910





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# 1 Introduction

This specification sets out the content and assessment details for our GCSE course in Geography. We have designed this specification to meet the requirements of:

- Northern Ireland GCSE Design Principles; and
- Northern Ireland GCE and GCSE Qualifications Criteria.

First teaching is from September 2017. We will make the first award based on this specification in Summer 2019.

This specification is a unitised course. The guided learning hours, as for all our GCSEs, are 120 hours.

The specification supports the aim of the Northern Ireland Curriculum to empower young people to achieve their potential and to make informed and responsible decisions throughout their lives, as well as its objectives:

- to develop the young person as an individual;
- to develop the young person as a contributor to society; and
- to develop the young person as a contributor to the economy and environment.

If there are any major changes to this specification, we will notify centres in writing. The online version of the specification will always be the most up to date; to view and download this please go to [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk)

## **1.1 Aims**

This specification aims to encourage students to:

- follow a broad, coherent and worthwhile course of study;
- actively engage in studying geography to develop as effective and independent learners and as critical thinkers with enquiring minds;
- develop their knowledge and understanding of geographical concepts and appreciate how these concepts affect our changing world;
- recognise the differences and similarities between people's views of the world, and its environments, societies and cultures;
- develop their responsibilities as global citizens and recognise how they can contribute to a future that is sustainable and inclusive;
- develop and apply their learning to the real world through fieldwork and other learning outside the classroom; and
- gain confidence in making informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career choices.

## **1.2 Key features**

The following are important features of this specification.

- It offers opportunities to build on the skills and capabilities developed through the delivery of the Northern Ireland Curriculum at Key Stage 3.
- Fieldwork is assessed through an external examination supported by primary data collection.
- There is one tier of entry for all students.
- It provides a sound basis for further study of geography, for example AS and A level Geography.

## **1.3 Prior attainment**

Students do not need to have reached a particular level of attainment before beginning to study this specification.

## **1.4 Classification codes and subject combinations**

Every specification has a national classification code that indicates its subject area. The classification code for this qualification is 3910.

Please note that if a student takes two qualifications with the same classification code, schools, colleges and universities that they apply to may take the view that they have achieved only one of the two GCSEs. The same may occur with any two GCSE qualifications that have a significant overlap in content, even if the classification codes are different. Because of this, students who have any doubts about their subject combinations should check with the schools, colleges and universities that they would like to attend before beginning their studies.

## 2 Specification at a Glance

The table below summarises the structure of this GCSE course.

Content	Assessment	Weightings	Availability
<p><b>Unit 1: Understanding Our Natural World</b></p> <p>Theme A: River Environments (25%)</p> <p>Theme B: Coastal Environments (25%)</p> <p>Theme C: Our Changing Weather and Climate (25%)</p> <p>Theme D: The Restless Earth (25%)</p>	<p>External written examination</p> <p>1 hour 30 mins</p> <p>The examination includes four multi-part questions, one on each theme. Students answer all four questions.</p>	40%	Summer from 2018
<p><b>Unit 2: Living in Our World</b></p> <p>Theme A: Population and Migration (25%)</p> <p>Theme B: Changing Urban Areas (25%)</p> <p>Theme C: Contrasts in World Development (25%)</p> <p>Theme D: Managing Our Environment (25%)</p>	<p>External written examination</p> <p>1 hour 30 mins</p> <p>The examination includes four multi-part questions, one on each theme. Students answer all four questions.</p>	40%	Summer from 2018

Content	Assessment	Weightings	Availability
<b>Unit 3: Fieldwork</b>	External written examination  1 hour  Students base their answers on their knowledge and experience of fieldwork.  Students must bring a fieldwork statement and table of data into the examination. For more details, see Section 6.3.	20%	Summer from 2019

Students must take at least 40 percent of the assessment (based on unit weightings) at the end of the course as terminal assessment.



## 3 Subject Content

We have divided this course into three units. This section sets out the content and learning outcomes for each unit.

### 3.1 Geographical concepts

Students must understand and apply the following concepts:

- interrelationships between people and the natural environment;
- the need to manage both physical and human resources;
- interdependence between countries;
- international co-operation to tackle global issues; and
- sustainable development.

### 3.2 Integration of skills and techniques

Teachers should integrate the following skills and techniques listed below into their teaching of the themes.

#### Map skills

Students should use a variety of maps, including those generated by geographic information systems (GIS), to develop their map skills. They should be able to:

- read maps and use the following:
  - letter and number co-ordinates;
  - four-figure and six-figure grid references;
  - latitude and longitude; and
  - the eight points of the compass;
- identify features on a plan or map by using symbols and a key;
- draw simple sketch maps that are not to scale;
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of scale by measuring area, straight line distances and curved line distances;
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how relief is represented on Ordnance Survey (OS) maps (1:50,000);
- identify major relief features on maps;
- relate cross-sectional drawings to relief features;
- construct and interpret maps to show distributions, densities and flows;
- analyse the interrelationship between physical and human factors on maps;
- identify, describe, analyse and interpret patterns on maps, including:
  - synoptic charts;
  - satellite images; and
  - aerial photographs; and
- establish associations between patterns observed on thematic maps.

## Data processing

Students should be able to:

- analyse and interpret a wide range of secondary sources, including census data (please note that census data is acceptable as primary or secondary data);
- identify geographical questions and issues;
- establish appropriate sequences of investigation;
- use a variety of methods, including ICT-based resources such as the internet and GIS, to do the following:
  - identify and collect evidence from primary and secondary sources;
  - prepare and present findings, incorporating text, tables, bar graphs, pictographs, line graphs, frequency diagrams, pie charts, scattergraphs, maps, annotated field sketches and/or sketch maps; and
  - investigate patterns in and relationships between variables, for example using spreadsheets, and using GIS packages to link digital data to map patterns;
- analyse and interpret a wide range of evidence, make decisions, and draw and justify conclusions; and
- evaluate methods of collecting, presenting and analysing evidence, as well as the validity and limitations of the evidence and conclusions.

### 3.3 Use of case studies/places for illustration purposes only

Teachers select appropriate **case study** material to exemplify the learning outcomes. Where an example of a case study is given in the learning outcomes, students are not expected to have been taught the particular example given. They should be able to illustrate their answer with detailed facts and figures for an appropriate case study of their choice.

In some instances, a detailed case study is not required; however, the learning outcomes are enhanced by **reference to places for illustration purposes only**.

For example, in Unit 2 Theme C, students should be able to:

- demonstrate understanding of fair trade and the advantages it brings to LEDCs (with reference to places for illustration purposes only).

So, students should be aware of the advantages of fair trade in general and they should be able to refer to some less economically developed countries (LEDCs) to illustrate this. They are not expected to know specific details about the advantages to these countries.

### 3.4 Unit 1: Understanding Our Natural World

This unit has four themes covering physical geographical processes and systems, and human interaction with them. Students investigate fluvial environments, coastal environments, the processes that shape our weather, and the forces that create earthquakes and volcanic activity.

Assessment for this unit is a written examination that includes both short response questions and extended writing questions. For more details, see Section 6.

#### Theme A: River Environments

This theme explores river features and the processes leading to their formation. Students investigate the causes of flooding and evaluate a river management strategy, referring to the principles of **sustainability**.

#### Key geographical terms

Water cycle, drainage basin, precipitation, interception, surface runoff/overland flow, infiltration, throughflow, percolation, groundwater flow, evapotranspiration, watershed, source, tributary, confluence, river mouth; gradient, depth, width, load, river discharge; erosion, attrition, abrasion/corrasion, hydraulic action, solution/corrosion; transportation, solution, suspension, saltation, traction; deposition; river landforms, waterfall, meander, slip-off slope, river cliff, floodplain, levees; flooding, river management **strategy**, hard engineering methods (dams, flood walls, levees, embankments, straightening and deepening the river), soft engineering methods (washlands, land use zoning, afforestation).

Content	Learning Outcomes
<p><b>The drainage basin: a component of the water cycle</b></p>	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following elements of the drainage basin and their interrelationships:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– inputs (precipitation);</li> <li>– stores (interception by vegetation);</li> <li>– transfers (surface runoff/overland flow, infiltration, throughflow, percolation and groundwater flow); and</li> <li>– outputs (river discharge and evapotranspiration).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Content	Learning Outcomes
<p><b>The drainage basin: a component of the water cycle (cont.)</b></p> <p><b>River processes and landforms</b></p> <p><b>Sustainable management of rivers</b></p>	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify and define the following characteristics of a drainage basin: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– watershed;</li> <li>– source;</li> <li>– tributary;</li> <li>– confluence; and</li> <li>– river mouth;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how gradient, depth, width, discharge and load change along the long profile of a river and its valley;</li> <li>• demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following processes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– erosion (attrition, abrasion/corrasion, hydraulic action and solution/corrosion);</li> <li>– transportation (solution, suspension, saltation and traction); and</li> <li>– deposition;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• explain (with reference to places for illustration purposes only) the formation of the following river landforms using annotated cross-sectional diagrams: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– waterfall;</li> <li>– meander, including slip-off slope and river cliff; and</li> <li>– floodplain and levees;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• interpret aerial photographs and OS maps to identify river landforms and land uses;</li> <li>• demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the physical and human causes of flooding in the context of one case study from the British Isles (for example Somerset Levels, 2014); and</li> <li>• recognise the impacts of flooding on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– people (loss of life, property and insurance cover); and</li> <li>– the environment (pollution and destruction of wildlife habitats).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Content	Learning Outcomes
<p><b>Sustainable management of rivers (cont.)</b></p>	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrate knowledge of the following flood management methods:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– hard engineering (dams, flood walls, levees, embankments, and straightening and deepening the river); and</li> <li>– soft engineering (washlands, land use zoning and afforestation); and</li> </ul> </li> <li>• investigate one case study of a river outside the British Isles (for example the Mississippi) and evaluate the river management strategy used, referring to the principles of <b>sustainability</b>.</li> </ul>

## Theme B: Coastal Environments

In this theme, students explore coastal landforms and the processes leading to their formation. Students investigate the need for coastal defences and evaluate hard and soft coastal management **methods**. **Students also evaluate a coastal management strategy, referring to the principles of sustainability.**

### Key geographical terms

Wave (constructive, destructive), erosion, attrition, abrasion/corrasion, hydraulic action, solution/corrosion; transportation, longshore drift; deposition; coastal landforms, headland, cliff, wave cut platform, cave, arch, stack, beach (sandy beach, shingle beach), spit, hooked spit; coastal defences, hard engineering methods (sea walls, groynes, gabions), soft engineering methods (beach nourishment, managed retreat), **coastal management strategy**.

Content	Learning Outcomes
<p><b>Coastal processes and landforms</b></p>	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrate understanding that the dynamic nature of the coast is due to constructive and destructive waves;</li> <li>• demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following processes:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– erosion (attrition, abrasion/corrasion, hydraulic action and solution/corrosion);</li> <li>– transportation (longshore drift); and</li> <li>– deposition;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• explain the formation of the following coastal landforms (with reference to places for illustration purposes only):                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– erosional landforms (headland, cliff, wave cut platform, cave, arch, stack and stump); and</li> <li>– depositional landforms (sandy beach, shingle beach and spit, including hooked spit); and</li> </ul> </li> <li>• interpret aerial photographs and OS maps to identify coastal landforms and land uses.</li> </ul>

Content	Learning Outcomes
<p><b>Sustainable management of coasts</b></p>	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● recognise the following reasons for coastal defences:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– in all continents, except Africa, most people live near coasts;</li> <li>– coastal areas are important economically, for example as a location for tourism, fishing and port activity; and</li> <li>– sea levels rise as a result of climate change;</li> </ul> </li> <li>● describe and evaluate the following methods of coastal management:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– hard engineering (sea walls, groynes and gabions); and</li> <li>– soft engineering (beach nourishment and managed retreat); and</li> </ul> </li> <li>● investigate one case study of coastal management from the British Isles (for example Newcastle, County Down), and evaluate the coastal management strategy used, referring to the principles of sustainability.</li> </ul>





Content	Learning Outcomes
<p><b>Weather systems affecting the British Isles</b></p>	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the temperature, moisture characteristics and seasonal variation of the following air masses affecting the British Isles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– tropical maritime;</li> <li>– tropical continental;</li> <li>– polar maritime; and</li> <li>– polar continental;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following (with reference to places for illustration purposes only): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the weather patterns and sequence of change associated with a frontal depression as it moves across the British Isles (weather at the warm front, in the warm sector and at the cold front); and</li> <li>– the weather patterns associated with anticyclones in the British Isles during winter and summer;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• interpret synoptic charts and satellite images and understand the following limitations of forecasting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– range; and</li> <li>– accuracy; and</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>The impacts of extreme weather</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• describe the impacts of extreme weather on people and property using a case study of extreme weather (tornado <b>or</b> drought <b>or</b> hurricane) outside the British Isles.</li> </ul>





### 3.5 Unit 2: Living in Our World

This unit has four themes covering key aspects of human geography. Students investigate topical issues such as the challenges facing refugees, issues for inner city areas in MEDCs, strategies such as the United Nations’ 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the environmental impact of the increasing use of resources.

Assessment for this unit is a written examination that includes both short response questions and extended writing questions. For more details, see Section 6.

#### Theme A: Population and Migration

This theme explores topical issues such as push and pull factors in migration, barriers to migration and the challenges faced by both refugees and destination countries. Students also analyse the implications of aged and youth dependency.

#### Key geographical terms

Population change, population structure, crude birth rate, crude death rate, natural change (natural increase, natural decrease); demographic transition model; population pyramid, dependency (youth and aged); migration (immigration and emigration), push and pull factors, economic migrant, refugee, destination country.

Content	Learning Outcomes
<p><b>Population growth, change and structure</b></p>	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• define the following terms:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– crude birth rate;</li> <li>– crude death rate; and</li> <li>– natural change (natural increase and natural decrease);</li> </ul> </li> <li>• demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of the five stages of the demographic transition model as it relates to the following:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– changing birth rates;</li> <li>– changing death rates; and</li> <li>– population change; and</li> </ul> </li> <li>• compare and contrast the population structure of an MEDC with an LEDC, using the following:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– a population pyramid for an MEDC showing an aged dependent population; and</li> <li>– a population pyramid for an LEDC showing a youth dependent population.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Content	Learning Outcomes
<p><b>Population growth, change and structure (cont.)</b></p> <p><b>Causes and impacts of migration</b></p>	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assess the social and economic implications of aged and youth dependency;</li> <li>• demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the push and pull factors leading to migration;</li> <li>• demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following barriers to migration:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– human barriers, for example visas; and</li> <li>– physical barriers, for example topography;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• distinguish between an economic migrant and a refugee; and</li> <li>• discuss the challenges faced by both refugees and the destination country, using one case study (for example Syrian refugees arriving in Greece).</li> </ul>



Content	Learning Outcomes
<p><b>Urbanisation in MEDCs and LEDCs</b></p>	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evaluate one MEDC urban planning scheme (for example Titanic Quarter, Belfast) that aims to regenerate and improve the following in the inner city zone:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– housing;</li> <li>– employment opportunities;</li> <li>– transport; and</li> <li>– the environment; and</li> </ul> </li> <li>• describe and explain the location, rapid growth and characteristics of shanty town areas, using one case study of an LEDC city (for example Kolkata, India).</li> </ul>





Content	Learning Outcomes
<p><b>Sustainable solutions to the problem of unequal development (cont.)</b></p> <p><b>Globalisation</b></p>	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrate understanding of fair trade and the advantages it brings to LEDCs (with reference to places for illustration purposes only);</li> <li>• demonstrate understanding of the meaning of the term globalisation; and</li> <li>• demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how globalisation both helps and hinders development, using one case study from a BRICS country.</li> </ul>

## Theme D: Managing Our Environment

By studying this theme, students explore the environmental impact of the increasing use of resources. They also gain an insight into the need to adopt strategies to manage resources. They investigate the impacts of mass tourism and the role that ecotourism can play in protecting the environment. **Students also analyse the causes and effects of global climate change.**

### Key geographical terms

Greenhouse effect, carbon footprint, climate change; waste hierarchy; renewable energy source, solar energy, wind energy, biofuels; sustainable tourism, mass tourism, responsible tourist, ecotourism.

Content	Learning Outcomes
<p><b>Human impact on the environment</b></p> <p><b>Strategies to manage our resources</b></p> <p><b>Sustainable tourism to preserve the environment</b></p>	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• describe the greenhouse effect, define carbon footprint and understand how both of these contribute to climate change;</li> <li>• evaluate the effects of climate change on the following (with reference to places for illustration purposes only): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the environment;</li> <li>– people; and</li> <li>– the economy;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• describe the waste hierarchy and the concept of ‘reduce, reuse and recycle’;</li> <li>• evaluate the benefits and disadvantages of one renewable energy source as a sustainable solution, for example wind farms;</li> <li>• describe and evaluate the 2015 International Climate Change Agreement;</li> <li>• evaluate the positive and negative cultural, economic and environmental impacts of mass tourism (with reference to places for illustration purposes only);</li> <li>• describe and explain how to be a responsible tourist;</li> <li>• describe and explain ecotourism; and</li> <li>• assess how ecotourism can protect the environment, using one case study from either an LEDC or an MEDC.</li> </ul>

### 3.6 Unit 3: Fieldwork

In this unit, students collect geographical data first-hand through fieldwork. Fieldwork is an essential aspect of geography. It involves applying specific geographical knowledge, understanding and skills to a particular and real out-of-classroom context.

The value of fieldwork goes beyond the aim of collecting primary data. Other key aspects of the investigative process include presenting and analysing results, drawing conclusions and reflecting critically on the process.

Experiencing geographical concepts, processes and issues in the real world can be illuminating for students. They gain new geographical insights and begin to appreciate different perspectives on the world around them.

Assessment for this unit is a written examination. Students must create and submit a word-processed fieldwork statement and table of data. For more details, see Section 6.

#### Key geographical terms

Hypothesis, risks, primary sources, secondary sources, data collection, data presentation, data analysis, interpretation, anomaly, conclusion.

Content	Learning Outcomes
<p><b>The geographical enquiry process</b></p> <p><b>Planning, including establishing aims and hypotheses</b></p> <p><b>Fieldwork techniques and methods</b></p>	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrate understanding of the process of geographical enquiry;</li> <li>• plan their enquiry by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– identifying questions or issues for investigation;</li> <li>– developing <b>one</b> aim; and</li> <li>– developing <b>a minimum of two</b> appropriate hypotheses;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• demonstrate understanding of the potential risks involved in fieldwork and how to reduce these risks;</li> <li>• demonstrate understanding of the difference between primary and secondary sources;</li> <li>• select data collection methods and equipment that ensure accuracy and reliability; and</li> <li>• record measurements and observations accurately using recording sheets.</li> </ul>

Content	Learning Outcomes
<p><b>Fieldwork techniques and methods (cont.)</b></p> <p><b>Processing and presenting data</b></p> <p><b>Analysing and interpreting data</b></p> <p><b>Drawing conclusions</b></p> <p><b>Evaluating the fieldwork</b></p>	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use at least one secondary source during the fieldwork investigation;</li> <li>• select and use appropriate graphical and cartographic methods, both hand drawn and using ICT, to process and present their fieldwork data;</li> <li>• explain why they chose these processing and presentation methods;</li> <li>• analyse and interpret their fieldwork data using their knowledge of relevant theory and/or case studies as appropriate;</li> <li>• establish links between data sets;</li> <li>• identify anomalies in their fieldwork data;</li> <li>• draw evidenced conclusions;</li> <li>• describe their data collection methods, including any equipment used;</li> <li>• identify problems with data collection methods;</li> <li>• identify limitations of the data collected;</li> <li>• suggest other data that might be useful;</li> <li>• evaluate their conclusions; and</li> <li>• suggest how they could extend the scope of the study.</li> </ul>

## 4 Scheme of Assessment

### 4.1 Assessment opportunities

For the availability of examinations and assessment, see Section 2.

This is a unitised specification; candidates must complete at least 40 percent of the overall assessment requirements at the end of the course, in the examination series in which they request a final subject grade. This is the terminal rule.

Candidates may resit individual assessment units once before cash-in. The better of the two results will count towards their final GCSE grade unless a unit is required to meet the 40 percent terminal rule. If it is, the more recent mark will count (whether or not it is the better result). Results for individual assessment units remain available to count towards a GCSE qualification until we withdraw the specification.

### 4.2 Assessment objectives

There are three assessment objectives for this specification. Candidates must:

- A01** demonstrate geographical knowledge and understanding of:
  - places, environments, processes and concepts; and
  - the interrelationships between places, environments and processes;
- A02** apply knowledge and understanding to analyse, interpret and evaluate geographical information and issues and to make judgements; and
- A03** select, adapt and use a variety of skills and techniques to investigate questions and issues and communicate findings.

### 4.3 Assessment objective weightings

The table below sets out the assessment objective weightings for each assessment component and the overall GCSE qualification.

Assessment Objective	Unit Weighting (%)			Overall Weighting (%)
	External Assessment			
	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	
<b>A01</b>	16	16	3	35
<b>A02</b>	16	16	8	40
<b>A03</b>	8	8	9	25
<b>Total Weighting</b>	40	40	20	100

## 4.4 Quality of written communication

In GCSE Geography, candidates must demonstrate their quality of written communication. They need to:

- ensure that text is legible and that spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurate so that meaning is clear;
- select and use a form and style of writing that suit their purpose and complex subject matter; and
- organise information clearly and coherently, using specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Quality of written communication is assessed in responses to questions and tasks that require extended writing.

## 4.5 Reporting and grading

We report the results of individual assessment units on a uniform mark scale that reflects the assessment weighting of each unit. We determine the grades awarded by aggregating the uniform marks that candidates obtain in individual assessment units.

We award GCSE qualifications on a grade scale from A\* to G, with A\* being the highest. The nine grades available are as follows:

<b>Grade</b>	A*	A	B	C*	C	D	E	F	G
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If candidates fail to attain a grade G or above, we report their result as unclassified (U).

## 5 Grade Descriptions

Grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content in the specification; they are not designed to define that content. The grade awarded depends in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of candidates' performance in the assessment may be balanced by better performances in others.

Grade	Description
<b>A</b>	<p>Candidates recall accurately, select and communicate detailed knowledge and thorough understanding of places, environments, processes and concepts. They use geographical terminology accurately and appropriately.</p> <p>Candidates apply appropriate knowledge and understanding of a wide range of geographical processes and patterns in a variety of physical and human contexts. They recognise and understand complex relationships between people and the environment, identifying and evaluating current issues and making perceptive and informed geographical decisions, recognising how they can contribute to a future that is sustainable.</p> <p>Candidates select, evaluate, and use effectively a wide range of relevant skills and appropriate techniques and technologies. They identify relevant questions and issues and establish appropriate sequences to undertake an investigation independently. They collect and record accurately a range of appropriate evidence from a wide range of sources, including fieldwork. They analyse and interpret information. They critically evaluate the validity of evidence and reflect on the evidence's limitations. They detect and respond to bias, making informed and reasoned judgements to present substantiated and appropriate conclusions. They develop as effective and independent learners.</p>

Grade	Description
<b>C</b>	<p>Candidates recall, select and communicate knowledge and understanding of places, environments, processes and concepts. They use geographical terminology appropriately.</p> <p>Candidates apply their knowledge and understanding of geographical processes and patterns in a variety of physical and human contexts. They understand relationships between people and the environment, identifying and evaluating problems and issues and making geographical decisions supported by reasons, including sustainable approaches.</p> <p>Candidates select and use a variety of skills and appropriate techniques and technologies to identify questions and issues and undertake an investigation. They collect and record appropriate evidence from a range of sources, including fieldwork. They analyse and interpret information and recognise some of the limitations of evidence, reaching plausible conclusions.</p>
<b>F</b>	<p>Candidates recall, select and communicate limited knowledge and understanding of places, environments, processes and concepts. They show basic knowledge of geographical terminology.</p> <p>Candidates apply their understanding of some simple geographical processes and patterns in physical and human contexts. They recognise simple relationships between people and the environment. They identify problems and issues and make decisions informed by simple reasons and evidence.</p> <p>Candidates use a limited number of skills, techniques and technologies to undertake an investigation. They collect and record a limited selection of evidence from some sources, including fieldwork. They interpret information to reach some basic conclusions.</p>



## 6 Guidance on External Assessment

There are three external assessment units in this specification:

- Unit 1: Understanding Our Natural World;
- Unit 2: Living in Our World; and
- Unit 3: Fieldwork.

The external assessment focuses on candidates' knowledge, understanding and analysis of the content of each unit.

### 6.1 Unit 1: Understanding Our Natural World

Assessment for this unit is a 1 hour 30 minute written examination.

The examination includes four multi-part questions, one on each theme. Each question includes resource material that may take a variety of forms, including photographs, data, models, diagrams and/or text. Each question also includes some parts that require extended writing.

Candidates answer all four questions.

### 6.2 Unit 2: Living in Our World

Assessment for this unit is a 1 hour 30 minute written examination.

The examination includes four multi-part questions, one on each theme. Each question includes resource material that may take a variety of forms, including photographs, data, models, diagrams and/or text. Each question also includes some parts that require extended writing.

Candidates answer all four questions.

### 6.3 Unit 3: Fieldwork

Assessment for this unit is a 1 hour written examination. All questions are generic in nature to facilitate a range of fieldwork contexts. Candidates base their answers on their knowledge and experience of the fieldwork skills detailed in Section 3.6, for example planning, drawing conclusions and evaluating.

For their fieldwork investigation, candidates choose an issue or question related to Units 1 or 2. They identify one aim and a minimum of two hypotheses. They do this individually, in small groups or as a class. They also identify sources and methods for collecting data. They must use both primary and secondary sources, for example maps, texts or census data (please note that we accept census data as primary or secondary data).

### **The fieldwork statement and table of data**

After collecting their data, candidates must create a fieldwork statement and a table of data. The fieldwork statement must include:

- a title;
- a statement of the aim and hypotheses that the candidate is testing; and
- details of the location of the study (including a map, if appropriate).

Candidates must not address other elements of the fieldwork investigation in this statement.

The table of data must include:

- primary data essential for investigating the aim of the study (candidates may include secondary data, if relevant);
- data collected for all variables relevant to the aim;
- quantitative data (numerical scores) to allow for graphical representation (candidates may include qualitative data, if relevant); and
- normal conventions, such as a title, and all variables clearly stated, along with their precise units of measurement.

We expect candidates to use ICT to present both their fieldwork statement and their table of data. At the end of the examination, candidates must attach their fieldwork statement and table of data to the script, along with a completed cover sheet. We do not assess the fieldwork statement or the table of data.

## 7 Curriculum Objectives

This specification builds on the learning experiences from Key Stage 3 as required for the statutory Northern Ireland Curriculum. It also offers opportunities for students to contribute to the aim and objectives of the Curriculum at Key Stage 4, and to continue to develop the Cross-Curricular Skills and the Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities. The extent of the development of these skills and capabilities will be dependent on the teaching and learning methodology used.

### 7.1 Cross-Curricular Skills at Key Stage 4

<b>Communication</b>
<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• communicate meaning, feelings and viewpoints in a logical and coherent manner, <i>for example describe the impacts of flooding or an earthquake from a range of viewpoints; present a report outlining a strategy to reduce the development gap;</i></li> <li>• make oral and written summaries, reports and presentations, taking account of audience and purpose, <i>for example make an oral presentation on a coastal management strategy; write a case study summary of the impact of migration into the European Union;</i></li> <li>• participate in discussions, debates and interviews, <i>for example debate the challenge of securing international co-operation to deal with climate change; role-play interviews with residents of shanty towns about their living conditions;</i></li> <li>• interpret, analyse and present information in oral, written and ICT formats, <i>for example analyse aerial photographs of coastal landforms; role-play the manager of an ecotourism project;</i> and</li> <li>• explore and respond, both imaginatively and critically, to a variety of texts, <i>for example interpret climate graphs; write a point-of-view report to evaluate the success of an appropriate technology project.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Using Mathematics</b>
<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use mathematical language and notation with confidence, <i>for example draw and annotate cross-section diagrams of a river; describe population pyramids;</i></li> <li>• select and apply mathematical concepts and problem-solving strategies in a range of simulated and real-life contexts, <i>for example use the logarithmic Richter scale to describe the impact of an earthquake;</i></li> <li>• interpret and analyse a wide range of mathematical data, <i>for example interpret rainfall graphs to discern the causes of flooding; connect population growth statistics and the increasing demand for resources;</i> and</li> <li>• present mathematical data in a variety of formats which take account of audience and purpose, <i>for example draw proportional arrow maps to represent air masses; draw population pyramids.</i></li> </ul>

### Using ICT

Students should be able to make effective use of information and communications technology in a wide range of contexts to access, manage, select and present information, including mathematical information, *for example take notes and give presentations; manage data collected on fieldwork; select appropriate map and/or graph methods to present fieldwork data.*

## 7.2 Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities at Key Stage 4

### Self-Management

Students should be able to:

- plan work, *for example contribute actively to the planning of fieldwork;*
- monitor, review and evaluate their progress and improve their learning, *for example use Assessment for Learning strategies to continually review and monitor progress, choose ways of learning to improve their performance and build on strengths, and identify when they need support;* and
- effectively manage their time, *for example stay on schedule when collecting fieldwork data as part of a group.*

### Working with Others

Students should be able to:

- learn with and from others through co-operation, *for example discuss priorities when collecting primary data through fieldwork;*
- participate in effective teams and accept responsibility for achieving collective goals, *for example collect primary data as part of a group;* and
- listen actively to others and influence group thinking and decision-making, taking account of others' opinions, *for example participate in a group discussion to assess the role of globalisation in an LEDC.*

## Problem Solving

Students should be able to:

- identify and analyse relationships and patterns, *for example analyse patterns and relationships evident in data collected first-hand through fieldwork;*
- propose justified explanations, *for example interpret fieldwork data using relevant geographical theory;*
- reason, form opinions and justify their views, *for example evaluate how migration affects the destination country;*
- analyse critically and assess evidence to understand how information or evidence can be used to serve different purposes or agendas, *for example analyse fieldwork data to determine whether to accept or reject stated hypotheses;*
- analyse and evaluate multiple perspectives, *for example consider the views of a range of stakeholders on a coastal management strategy;*
- explore unfamiliar views without prejudice, *for example explore the challenges that asylum seekers face in their destination country;*
- weigh up options and justify decisions, *for example evaluate the suitability of hard engineering and soft engineering methods to deal effectively with the flood threat for a named river;* and
- apply and evaluate a range of approaches to solve problems in familiar and novel contexts, *for example analyse strategies to respond to climate change.*

Although not referred to separately as a statutory requirement at Key Stage 4 in the Northern Ireland Curriculum, **Managing Information** and **Being Creative** may also remain relevant to learning.

## 8 Links and Support

### 8.1 Support

The following resources are available to support this specification:

- our Geography microsite at [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk) and
- specimen assessment materials.

We also intend to provide:

- past papers;
- mark schemes;
- Chief Examiner's reports;
- planning frameworks;
- centre support visits;
- support days for teachers;
- a resource list; and
- exemplification of examination performance.

### 8.2 Examination entries

Entry codes for this subject and details on how to make entries are available on our Qualifications Administration Handbook microsite, which you can access at [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk)

Alternatively, you can telephone our Examination Entries, Results and Certification team using the contact details provided.

### 8.3 Equality and inclusion

We have considered the requirements of equality legislation in developing this specification and designed it to be as free as possible from ethnic, gender, religious, political and other forms of bias.

GCSE qualifications often require the assessment of a broad range of competences. This is because they are general qualifications that prepare students for a wide range of occupations and higher level courses.

During the development process, an external equality panel reviewed the specification to identify any potential barriers to equality and inclusion. Where appropriate, we have considered measures to support access and mitigate barriers.

We can make reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities to reduce barriers to accessing assessments. For this reason, very few students will have a complete barrier to any part of the assessment. Requirements for fieldwork are sufficiently flexible for all candidates to participate.

It is important to note that where access arrangements are permitted, they must not be used in any way that undermines the integrity of the assessment.

You can find information on reasonable adjustments in the Joint Council for Qualifications document *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*, available at [www.jcq.org.uk](http://www.jcq.org.uk)

## 8.4 Contact details

If you have any queries about this specification, please contact the relevant CCEA staff member or department:

- Specification Support Officer: Arlene Ashfield  
(telephone: (028) 9026 1200, extension 2291, email: [aashfield@ccea.org.uk](mailto:aashfield@ccea.org.uk))
- Principal Officer: Margaret McMullan  
(telephone: (028) 9026 1200, extension 2285, email: [mmcmullan@ccea.org.uk](mailto:mmcmullan@ccea.org.uk))
- Examination Entries, Results and Certification  
(telephone: (028) 9026 1262, email: [entriesandresults@ccea.org.uk](mailto:entriesandresults@ccea.org.uk))
- Examiner Recruitment  
(telephone: (028) 9026 1243, email: [appointments@ccea.org.uk](mailto:appointments@ccea.org.uk))
- Distribution  
(telephone: (028) 9026 1242, email: [cceadistribution@ccea.org.uk](mailto:cceadistribution@ccea.org.uk))
- Support Events Administration  
(telephone: (028) 9026 1401, email: [events@ccea.org.uk](mailto:events@ccea.org.uk))
- Moderation  
(telephone: (028) 9026 1200, extension 2236, email: [moderationteam@ccea.org.uk](mailto:moderationteam@ccea.org.uk))
- Business Assurance (Complaints and Appeals)  
(telephone: (028) 9026 1244, email: [complaints@ccea.org.uk](mailto:complaints@ccea.org.uk) or [appealsmanager@ccea.org.uk](mailto:appealsmanager@ccea.org.uk)).

## Summary of Changes since First Issue

(Most recent changes are indicated in red on the latest version)

Revision History Number	Date of Change	Page Number	Change Made
Version 1	N/A	N/A	First issue
Version 2	23 March 2017	13	Sentence reworded
Version 3	15 June 2017	9	Words replaced
		11	Words replaced
		12	Words replaced and sentence added
		13	Words replaced
		14	Sentence deleted
		20	Words replaced and words added
		24	Sentence added





