



National Geography



Purpose of the Course

The purpose of Geography is to develop the learners' understanding of our changing world and its human and physical processes. Opportunities for practical activities, including fieldwork, will be encouraged, so that learners can interact with their environment.

The contexts for study are local, national, international and global. In the 21st century, with growing awareness of the impact of human activity on the environment and scarce resources, the study of Geography fosters positive life-long attitudes of environmental stewardship, sustainability and global citizenship. The National Geography course will furnish learners with the skills, knowledge and understanding to enable them to contribute effectively to their local communities and wider society.

Entry Requirements

You do not have to have studied preference Geography in S3 to take on National Geography.

Although it is preferred to have studied Geography in preference classes it is not a requirement as the necessary skills for the subject will have been covered to some extent in other humanities subjects.

Any pupil from S4-S6 is able to study National Geography regardless of their previous experience in the subject.

Topics Studied in National Geography

There are 3 units covered in National Geography, each containing smaller topic areas. In addition pupils will develop geographical skills throughout the course that are relevant to all three units. Pupils at National 3, 4 and 5 will study all the topics; however the assessment requirements will be altered depending on the level of the pupil.

UNIT	TOPIC	DESCRIPTION OF TOPIC
Physical Environments	Glaciation	Pupils will study the formation of erosional features. They will also study the land uses associated with the areas. They will investigate why they are suited to that area, how they might conflict with each other and how these conflicts may be solved. Pupils will develop the skill of identifying features and land uses on an OS map.
	Coasts	Pupils will study the formation of erosional features. They will also study the land uses associated with the areas. They will investigate why they are suited to that area, how they might conflict with each other and how these conflicts may be solved. Pupils will develop the skill of identifying features and land uses on an OS map.
	Weather	Pupils will study the factors affecting weather in the U.K. they will study the characteristics of weather associated with high and low pressure and develop the skills of reading synoptic charts and weather station circles.
Human Environments	Population	Pupils will investigate the development of both developed and developing countries. They will learn about the indicators used to determine development, the physical and human factors affecting the distribution of people and factors affecting birth and death rates. Pupils will develop the skills of interpreting population pyramids and extracting information from tabular, graphical and numerical sources.
	Rural	Pupils will study farming practices and the changes in India and the U.K. They will look at changes such as the development of organic farming, gm crops and the use of modern machinery.
	Urban	Pupils will study the characteristics of land uses in developed world. They will focus on a case study of Glasgow and analyse the impacts of recent developments in the city. They will also study the impacts of the development of shanty towns in India.
Global Issues	Health	Pupils will study the worldwide distribution of diseases and be able to give reasons for this. They will study the cause, effect and management of HIV/AIDS, heart disease and malaria in developed and developing countries. Pupils will develop the skills of extracting information from tabular, graphical and numerical sources.
	Environmental Hazards	Pupils will study the main features of earthquakes, tropical storms and volcanoes. They will study the cause, impact and management of each environmental hazard.

National 3 and 4 Internal Assessments

Pupils who are taking National 3 and 4 Geography will sit internal assessments throughout the duration of the course. These assessment standards are judged at pass or fail and must be passed for pupils to achieve a National 4 or National 3 award. At National 4 in addition to passing their assessment standards pupils must also sit an added value unit. This is a research project undertaken by the pupils with minimal support from the teacher, more information on the National 4 added value unit is included below. Should pupils fail to pass an assessment standard then they will have the opportunity to re-sit the assessment standards once and will be given plenty of notice for re-assessment.

National 4 Added Value Unit

Pupils at National 4 level must complete an added value unit to achieve their course award. The added value unit is designed to test the pupils' depth of knowledge and understanding of Geography as well as their geographical skills. The added value unit is a research project on a geographical topic of their choosing. Pupils are required to conduct research into their topic, either through field work or the use of secondary sources. Pupils will have the opportunity to participate in the Geography field trip to complete their research. This is a voluntary part of the course but is strongly advised in order to improve the data collection for the assignment. In previous years the locations have included Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National park, Leith in Edinburgh and local investigations in Newton Stewart and Wigtown. Pupils will then use the data they have collected to write up a report on their findings. This will be completed with minimal teacher support and pupils must pass this element of the course in order to achieve their National 4 award.

External Assessments – National 5 ONLY

Pupils who are taking the National 5 course will sit a final exam in the May exam diet. This exam will cover all 3 units as well as assessing the skills pupils have developed throughout the course.

Although every **unit** will be assessed there is no guarantee that every **topic** area studied will be assessed in the exam. However pupils must be prepared to answer a question on any topic covered.

In addition to completing their exam pupils must also submit an added value assignment write up. This added value is a research project on a geographical topic of their choosing. Pupils are required to research their topic before writing up a report on their findings. This will be sent to the SQA for external assessment.

In order to carry out research for the assignment pupils will have the opportunity to complete fieldwork. This is a voluntary part of the course but is strongly advised in order to improve the data collection for the assignment. In previous years the locations have included Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National park, Leith in Edinburgh and local investigations in Newton Stewart and Wigtown. The field trip data collection will relate to an area studied in the course and provide candidates with an opportunity to collect data for their assignment as well as a chance to widen and deepen their knowledge of the topics covered in Geography.

The assignment will be written up in an hour under exam conditions. Candidates are able to take two A4 sides of processed information into the assignment to help write up their assignment. This will include graphs, annotated photos and figures from their data collection to help back up their information in the assignment with evidence.

The total marks for the National Geography course is 100 marks. A breakdown of these marks is below.

Assessment/Marks	Breakdown
Exam Paper 80 marks 80% 2 hours and 20 minutes	Physical Environments – 30 marks
	Human Environments – 30 marks
	Global Issues – 20 marks
Assignment 20 marks 20% 1 hour to write up	Research Methods – 6 Marks Findings – 14 marks
Total Assessment Marks –100 marks – Graded A-D	

Homework

Pupils will be given regular homework on a weekly basis. Homework will consist of past paper questions, research tasks and revision. Pupils are expected to be revising their notes and completing past paper questions regularly in addition to their formal homework.

Revision Materials

Pupils will each have access to the National Geography Revision Notes. This will be on loan from the Geography department for the duration of their course and must be returned at the end of the year. This will provide pupils with a comprehensive set of course notes and past paper questions.

In addition a supported study after school club will be offered to pupils to access additional support out with class time. It is highly recommended that pupils attend supported study throughout the year.

Progression

The natural progression from National 4 Geography is into National 5 Geography. Pupils will also be well equipped for study at National 4 level in other related subjects such as the humanities subjects or environmental science.

Pupils who wish to progress onto Higher Geography will be required to achieve a pass of a C or above at National 5 Geography. Candidates who achieve a D may be considered after consultation with the teacher. Pupils who pass National 5 Geography will be well equipped to progress onto other related subjects at National 5 level for example another humanities subject such as History, R.M.P.S or Modern Studies. Pupils will also be well suited to study in Environmental Science, a subject with many cross cutting themes and topics.