

International AS and A-level **Geography**

(9635) Specification



For teaching from September 2018 onwards

For International AS exams

May/June 2019 onwards

For International A-level exams

May/June 2020 onwards

For teaching and examination outside
the United Kingdom

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Are you using the latest version of this specification?

- You will always find the most up-to-date version of this specification on our website at [oxfordaqa.com/9635](https://www.oxfordaqa.com/9635)
- We will write to you if there are significant changes to the specification.

1 Introduction

1.1 Why choose OxfordAQA for International AS and A-levels?

Our international qualifications enable schools that follow a British curriculum to benefit from the best education expertise in the United Kingdom (UK).

Our International AS and A-levels offer the same rigour and high quality as AS and A-levels in the UK and are relevant and appealing to students worldwide. They reflect a deep understanding of the needs of teachers and schools around the globe and are brought to you by Oxford University Press and AQA, the UK's leading awarding body.

Providing valid and reliable assessments, these qualifications are based on over 100 years of experience, academic research and international best practice. They have been independently validated as being to the same standard as the qualifications accredited by the UK examinations regulator, Ofqual. They reflect the latest changes to the British system, enabling students to progress to higher education with up-to-date qualifications.

You can find out about OxfordAQA at oxfordaqa.com

1.2 Why choose our International AS and A-level Geography?

The International AS and A-level Geography provides students with an opportunity to explore core areas of geography, developing their knowledge and understanding within a framework of geographical theory and research. The content is divided equally between physical and human geography but, throughout the course, there is an emphasis on the inter-connections between the two in environmental geography. This enables students to develop a broad knowledge and understanding of a wide range of topics as a preparation for further study and/or for everyday and working life. The topics have been chosen to ensure that the course content is relevant to people from all cultural and ethnic backgrounds, with special emphasis on some topics that might be particularly suitable for study in areas beyond the UK and Europe. The combination of physical, human and environmental topics means that the subject should appeal to students who are aiming to develop careers in a wide range of disciplines. Most importantly, it teaches students to consider a wide range of issues and problems with open minds and to take account of a range of views when seeking solutions. The research skills and data analysis elements of the course will enable students to develop competence and confidence in practical, mathematical and problem-solving skills involved in designing and conducting scientific research.

You can find out about all our International AS and A-level Geography qualifications at oxfordaqa.com/geography

1.3 Recognition

OxfordAQA meet the needs of international students. Please refer to the published timetables on the exams administration page of our website ([oxfordaqa.com/exams-administration](https://www.oxfordaqa.com/exams-administration)) for up to date exam timetabling information. They are an international alternative and comparable in standard to the Ofqual regulated qualifications offered in the UK.

Our qualifications have been independently benchmarked by UK NARIC, the UK national agency for providing expert opinion on qualifications worldwide. They have confirmed they can be considered 'comparable to the overall GCE A-level and GCSE standard offered in the UK'. You can read their report at [oxfordaqa.com/recognition](https://www.oxfordaqa.com/recognition)

To see the latest list of universities who have stated they accept these international qualifications, visit [oxfordaqa.com/recognition](https://www.oxfordaqa.com/recognition)

1.4 Support and resources to help you teach

We know that support and resources are vital for your teaching and that you have limited time to find or develop good quality materials. That's why we've worked with experienced teachers to provide resources that will help you confidently plan, teach and prepare for exams.

Teaching resources

You will have access to:

- sample schemes of work to help you plan your course with confidence
- training courses to help you deliver our qualifications
- student textbooks that have been checked and approved by us
- engaging worksheets and activities developed by teachers, for teachers
- command words with exemplars
- geography vocabulary with definitions

Preparing for exams

You will have access to the support you need to prepare for our exams, including:

- specimen papers and mark schemes
- exemplar student answers with examiner commentaries.

Analyse your students' results with Enhanced Results Analysis (ERA)

After the first examination series, you can use this tool to see which questions were the most challenging, how the results compare to previous years and where your students need to improve. ERA, our free online results analysis tool, will help you see where to focus your teaching.

Information about results, including maintaining standards over time, grade boundaries and our post-results services, will be available on our website in preparation for the first examination series.

Help and support

Visit our website for information, guidance, support and resources at oxfordaqa.com/9635

You can contact the subject team directly at geography@oxfordaqa.com or call us on +44 (0)161 696 5995 (option 1 and then 1 again).

Please note: We aim to respond to all email enquiries within two working days.

Our UK office hours are Monday to Friday, 8am – 5pm.

2 Specification at a glance

The title of the qualification is:

- OxfordAQA International Advanced Subsidiary Geography
- OxfordAQA International Advanced Level Geography.

These qualifications are modular. The full International A-level is intended to be taken over two years. The specification content for the International AS is half that of an International A-level. The International AS can be taken as a standalone qualification or can be used to count towards the International A-level. Students can take the International AS Units in the first year and then take the International A-level Units in the second year to complete the full International A-level, or they can take all the Units together in the same examination series at the end of the course.

The International AS content will be 50% of the International A-level content but International AS assessments will contribute 40% of the total marks for the full International A-level qualification, with the remaining 60% coming from the International A-level assessments.

For the OxfordAQA International AS and A-level students can take the units in any order. Possible combinations are;

- take Unit 1a **or** Unit 1b and 2 only, for the OxfordAQA International AS qualification
or
- take Unit 1a **or** Unit 1b and 2, for the OxfordAQA International AS qualification, in one series, then Units 3, 4 and 5 for the full OxfordAQA International A-level, in a later series
or
- take Unit 1a **or** Unit 1b, 2, 3, 4 and 5 in the same series, leading to the full OxfordAQA International A-level.

Students may resit a unit any number of times within the shelf-life of the specification. The best result for each unit will count towards the final qualification. Examinations will be available in January and May/June.

The guided learning hours (GLH) for an OxfordAQA International Advanced Subsidiary is 180.

The guided learning hours (GLH) for an OxfordAQA International Advanced Level is 360.

These figures are for guidance only and may vary according to local practice and the learner's prior experience.

2.1 Subject content

1 Physical geography 1

Section A: Living with hazards
Section B: Hot desert systems and landscapes
or
Section C: Coastal systems and landscapes

2 Human geography 1

Section A: Global systems and governance
Section B: Resource security

3 Physical geography 2

Section A: Water, carbon and life on Earth
Section B: Ecosystems under stress

4 Human geography 2

Section A: Changing places
Section B: People and contemporary urban environments

5 Fieldwork and geographical skills

2.2 Assessments

Unit 1: Physical geography 1	+	Unit 2: Human geography 1
<p>What's assessed</p> <p>Unit 1a Living with hazards Hot desert systems and landscapes</p> <p>or</p> <p>Unit 1b Living with hazards Coastal systems and landscapes</p>		<p>What's assessed</p> <p>Global systems and governance</p> <p>Resource security</p>
<p>How it's assessed</p> <p>Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes</p>		<p>How it's assessed</p> <p>Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes</p>
<p>Questions</p> <p>Section A: answer all questions (40 marks)</p> <p>Section B: answer one all questions (40 marks)</p>		<p>Questions</p> <p>Section A: answer all questions (40 marks)</p> <p>Section B: answer all questions (40 marks)</p>

Unit 3: Physical geography 2	+	Unit 4: Human geography 2	+	Unit 5: Fieldwork and geographical skills
<p>What's assessed</p> <p>Water, carbon and life on Earth</p> <p>Ecosystems under stress</p>		<p>What's assessed</p> <p>Changing places</p> <p>People and contemporary urban environments</p>		<p>What's assessed</p> <p>Fieldwork and geographical skills</p>
<p>How it's assessed</p> <p>Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes</p>		<p>How it's assessed</p> <p>Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes</p>		<p>How it's assessed</p> <p>Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes</p>
<p>Questions</p> <p>Section A: answer all questions (40 marks)</p> <p>Section B: answer all questions (40 marks)</p>		<p>Questions</p> <p>Section A: answer all questions (40 marks)</p> <p>Section B: answer all questions (40 marks)</p>		<p>Questions</p> <p>Answer all questions (60 marks)</p>

3 Subject content

3.1 Unit 1: Physical geography 1

For Unit 1 choose either 3.1.2 Section B: Hot desert systems and landscapes or 3.1.3 Section C: Coastal systems and landscapes

3.1.1 Section A: Living with hazards

This section of our specification focuses on the lithosphere and the atmosphere, which intermittently but regularly present natural hazards to human populations, often in dramatic and sometimes catastrophic fashion. By exploring the origin and nature of these hazards and the various ways in which people respond to them, students are able to engage with many dimensions of the relationships between people and the environments they occupy. Study of this section offers the opportunity to exercise and develop observation skills, measurement and geospatial mapping skills, together with data manipulation and statistical skills, including those associated with and arising from fieldwork.

3.1.1.1 The concept of hazard in a geographical context

Nature, forms and potential impacts of natural hazards (geophysical, atmospheric and hydrological); hazard perception and its economic and cultural determinants; characteristic human responses – fatalism, prediction, adjustment/adaptation, mitigation, management, risk-sharing – and their relationship to hazard incidence, intensity, magnitude, distribution and level of development; the Park model of human response to hazards; the Hazard management cycle.

3.1.1.2 Plate tectonics

Earth structure and internal energy sources; plate tectonic theory of crustal evolution: tectonic plates; plate movement; gravitational sliding; ridge push, slab pull; convection currents and seafloor spreading.

Destructive, constructive and conservative plate margins; characteristic processes: seismicity and volcanicity; associated landforms: young fold mountains, rift valleys, ocean ridges, deep sea trenches and island arcs, volcanoes; magma plumes and their relationship to plate movement.

3.1.1.3 Volcanic hazards

The nature of volcanicity and its relation to plate tectonics; forms of volcanic hazard; nuées ardentes, lava flows, mudflows, pyroclastic and ash fallout, gases/acid rain, tephra; spatial distribution, magnitude, frequency, regularity and predictability of hazard events.

Impacts: primary/secondary, environmental, social, economic, political; short and long-term responses: risk management designed to reduce the impacts of the hazard through preparedness, mitigation, prevention and adaptation.

Impacts and human responses as evidenced by a recent volcanic event.

3.1.1.4 Seismic hazards

The nature of seismicity and its relation to plate tectonics; forms of seismic hazard: earthquakes, shockwaves, tsunamis, liquefaction, landslides; spatial distribution, randomness, magnitude, frequency, regularity, predictability of hazard events.

Impacts: primary/secondary; environmental, social, economic, political; short and long-term responses; risk management designed to reduce the impacts of the hazard through preparedness, mitigation, prevention and adaptation.

Impacts and human responses as evidenced by a recent seismic event.

3.1.1.5 Storm hazards

The nature of tropical storms and their underlying causes; forms of storm hazard: high winds, storm surges, coastal flooding, river flooding and landslides; spatial distribution, magnitude, frequency, regularity, predictability of hazard events.

Impacts: primary/secondary, environmental, social, economic, political; short and long-term responses: risk management designed to reduce the impacts of the hazard through preparedness, mitigation, prevention and adaptation.

Impacts and human responses as evidenced by two recent tropical storms in contrasting areas of the world.

3.1.1.6 Fires in nature

Nature of wildfires; conditions favouring intense wild fires: vegetation type, fuel characteristics, climate and recent weather and fire behaviour; causes of fires: natural and human agency; impacts: primary/secondary, environmental, social, economic, political; short and long-term responses; risk management designed to reduce the impacts of the hazard through preparedness, mitigation, prevention and adaptation.

Impact and human responses as evidenced by a recent wild fire event.

3.1.1.7 Case studies

Case study of a multi-hazardous environment to illustrate and analyse the nature of the hazards and the social, economic and environmental risks presented, and how human qualities and responses such as resilience, adaptation, mitigation and management contribute to its continuing human occupation.

Case study at a local scale of a specified place in a hazardous setting to illustrate the physical nature of the hazard and analyse how the economic, social and political character of its community reflects the presence and impacts of the hazard and the community's response to the risk.

3.1.2 Section B: Hot desert systems and landscapes

This section of our specification considers drylands which occur at all latitudes and are characterised by limited soil moisture caused by low precipitation and high evaporation. The focus is on hot deserts and their margins, where the operation of characteristic aeolian and episodic fluvial processes with their distinctive landscape outcomes are readily observable. In common with water and carbon cycles, a systems approach to study is specified.

Student engagement with subject content fosters informed appreciation of the beauty and diversity of deserts and the challenges they present as human habitats. The section offers the opportunity, in the right settings, to exercise and develop geographical skills, including observation, measurement and geospatial mapping skills, together with data manipulation and statistical skills, including those associated with and arising from fieldwork.

3.1.2.1 Deserts as natural systems

Systems in physical geography: systems concepts and their application to the development of desert landscapes – inputs, outputs, energy, stores/components, flows/transfers, positive/negative feedback, dynamic equilibrium; the concepts of landform and landscape and how related landforms combine to form characteristic landscapes.

The global distribution of mid and low latitude deserts and their margins (arid and semi-arid).

Characteristics of hot desert environments and their margins: climate, soils and vegetation (and their interaction); water balance and aridity index.

The causes of aridity: atmospheric processes relating to pressure, winds, continentality, relief and cold ocean currents.

3.1.2.2 Systems and processes

Sources of energy in hot desert environments: insolation, winds, runoff.

Sediment sources, cells and budgets.

Geomorphological processes: weathering, mass movement, erosion, transportation and deposition.

Distinctively arid geomorphological processes: weathering (thermal fracture, exfoliation, chemical weathering, block and granular disintegration).

The role of wind – erosion: deflation and abrasion; transportation; suspension, saltation, surface creep, deposition.

Sources of water: exogenous, endoreic and ephemeral; the episodic role of water; sheet flooding, channel flash flooding.

3.1.2.3 Arid landscape development in contrasting settings

Origin and development of landforms of mid and low latitude deserts: aeolian – deflation hollows, desert pavements, ventifacts, yardangs, zeugen, barchans and sief dunes; water – wadis, bahadas, pediments, playas, inselbergs.

The relationship between process, time, landforms and landscapes in mid and low latitude desert settings: characteristic desert landscapes.

3.1.2.4 Desertification

The changing extent and distribution of hot deserts over the last 10,000 years; the causes of desertification – climate change and human impact; distribution of areas at risk; impact on ecosystems, landscapes and populations; predicted climate change and its impacts; alternative possible futures for local populations.

3.1.2.5 Quantitative and qualitative skills

Students must engage with a range of quantitative and relevant qualitative skills, within the theme of landscape systems. These should include observation skills, measurement and geospatial mapping skills and data manipulation and statistical skills applied to field measurements.

3.1.2.6 Case studies

Case study of a hot desert environment setting to illustrate and analyse key themes set out above and engage with field data (exemplifying field data may be gathered in settings that experience some of the aeolian processes associated with mid and low latitude desert environments such as coastal dunes).

Case study at a local scale of a landscape where desertification has occurred to illustrate and analyse key themes of desertification, causes and impacts, implications for sustainable development; evaluation of human responses of resilience, mitigation and adaptation.

3.1.3 Section C: Coastal systems and landscapes

This section of our specification focuses on coastal zones, which are dynamic environments in which landscapes develop by the interaction of winds, waves, currents and terrestrial and marine sediments. The operation and outcomes of fundamental geomorphological processes and their association with distinctive landscapes are readily observable. In common with water and carbon cycles, a systems approach to study is specified.

Student engagement with subject content fosters an informed appreciation of the beauty and diversity of coasts and their importance as human habitats. The section offers the opportunity to exercise and develop observation skills, measurement and geospatial mapping skills, together with data manipulation and statistical skills, including those associated with and arising from fieldwork.

3.1.3.1 Coasts as natural systems

Systems in physical geography: systems concepts and their application to the development of coastal landscapes – inputs, outputs, energy, stores/components, flows/transfers, positive/negative feedback, dynamic equilibrium; the concepts of landform and landscape and how related landforms combine to form characteristic landscapes.

3.1.3.2 Systems and processes

Sources of energy in coastal environments: winds, waves (constructive and destructive), currents and tides; low energy and high energy coasts.

Sediment sources, cells and budgets.

Geomorphological processes: weathering, mass movement, erosion, transportation and deposition.

Distinctively coastal processes: marine erosion – hydraulic action, wave quarrying, corrasion/abrasion, cavitation, solution, attrition; transportation: traction, suspension (longshore/littoral drift) and deposition; sub-aerial weathering, mass movement and runoff.

3.1.3.3 Coastal landscape development

This content must include study of a variety of landscapes from beyond the United Kingdom (UK) but may also include UK examples.

Origin and development of landforms and landscapes of coastal erosion: cliffs and wave cut platforms, cliff profile features including caves, arches and stacks; factors and processes in their development.

Origin and development of landforms and landscapes of coastal deposition; beaches, simple and compound spits, tombolos, offshore bars, barrier beaches and islands and sand dunes; factors and processes in their development.

Estuarine mudflat/saltmarsh environments and associated landscapes; factors and processes in their development.

Eustatic, isostatic and tectonic sea level change: major changes in sea level in the last 10,000 years.

Coastlines of emergence and submergence. Origin and development of associated landforms: raised beaches, marine platforms; rias, fjords, Dalmatian coasts.

Recent and predicted climatic change and potential impact on coasts; the relationship between process, time, landforms and landscapes in coastal settings.

3.1.3.4 Coastal management

Human intervention in coastal landscapes; traditional approaches to coastal flood and erosion risk: hard and soft engineering; sustainable approaches to coastal flood risk and coastal erosion management: shoreline management/integrated coastal zone management.

3.1.3.5 Quantitative and qualitative skills

Students must engage with a range of quantitative and relevant qualitative skills, within the theme of landscape systems. These should include observation skills, measurement and geospatial mapping skills and data manipulation and statistical skills applied to field measurements.

3.1.3.6 Case studies

Case study of coastal environment at a local scale to illustrate and analyse fundamental coastal processes, their landscape outcomes as set out above and challenges represented in their sustainable management.

Case study of a contrasting coastal landscape to illustrate and analyse how it presents risks and opportunities for human occupation and development and evaluate human responses of resilience, mitigation and adaptation.

One or both of the case studies should allow engagement with field data from primary and/or secondary sources.

3.2 Unit 2: Human geography 1

3.2.1 Section A: Global systems and governance

This section of our specification focuses on globalisation – the economic, political and social changes associated with technological and other driving forces which have been a key feature of global economy and society in recent decades. Increased interdependence and transformed relationships between peoples, states and environments have prompted more or less successful attempts at a global level to manage and govern some aspects of human affairs. Students engage with important dimensions of these phenomena with particular emphasis on international trade and access to markets and the governance of the global commons. Students contemplate many complex dimensions of contemporary world affairs and their own place in and perspective on them. Study of this section offers the opportunity to exercise and develop both qualitative and quantitative approaches to gathering, processing and interpreting relevant information and data, including, those associated with and arising from fieldwork.

3.2.1.1 Globalisation

Dimensions of globalisation: flows of capital, labour, products, services and information; global marketing; patterns of production, distribution and consumption.

Factors in globalisation: the development of technologies, systems and relationships, including financial, transport, security, communications, management and information systems and trade agreements.

3.2.1.2 Global systems

Form and nature of economic, political, social and environmental interdependence in the contemporary world.

Issues associated with interdependence including how:

- unequal flows of people, money, ideas and technology within global systems can sometimes act to promote stability, growth and development but can also cause inequalities, conflicts and injustices for people and places
- unequal power relations enable some states to drive global systems to their own advantage and to directly influence geopolitical events, while others are only able to respond or resist in a more constrained way.

3.2.1.3 International trade and access to markets

Global features and trends in the volume and pattern of international trade and investment associated with globalisation.

Trading relationships and patterns between large, highly developed economies such as the United States, the European Union, emerging major economies such as China and India and smaller, less developed economies such as those in sub-Saharan Africa, southern Asia and Latin America.

Differential access to markets associated with levels of economic development and trading agreements and its impacts on economic and societal well-being.

The nature and role of transnational corporations (TNCs), including their spatial organisation, production, linkages, trading and marketing patterns, with a detailed reference to a specified TNC and its impacts on those countries in which it operates.

World trade in at least one food commodity or one product of manufacturing.

Analysis and assessment of the geographical consequences of global systems to specifically consider how international trade and variable access to markets underlies and impacts on students' and other people's lives across the globe.

3.2.1.4 Global governance

The emergence and developing role of norms, laws and institutions in regulating and reproducing global systems.

Issues associated with attempts at global governance, including how:

- agencies, including the UN in the post-1945 era, can work to promote growth and stability but may also exacerbate inequalities and injustices
- interactions between the local, regional, national, international and global scales are fundamental to understanding global governance.

3.2.1.5 The 'global commons'

The concept of the 'global commons'; the rights of all to the benefits of the global commons; acknowledgement that the rights of all people to sustainable development must also acknowledge the need to protect the global commons.

3.2.1.6 The oceans as a global common

An outline of the contemporary geography of the world's oceans (Atlantic, Pacific, Indian, Arctic and Antarctic) to demonstrate their role as a global common and illustrate their vulnerability to global economic pressures and environmental change.

Reference should be made to:

- continental shelves
- continental slopes
- abyssal plains
- mid-ocean ridges
- trenches
- volcanic arcs
- coral reefs

and to the

- epipelagic zone
- mesopelagic zone
- bathypelagic zone
- abyssopelagic zone.

Threats to the world's oceans arising from:

- climate change
- fishing and whaling
- pollution by oil and plastics
- shipping, trade and tourism.

Critical appraisal of the developing governance of the world's oceans; international government organisations to include International Maritime Organisation (IMO) including marine pollution conventions and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) – their purpose, scope and systems for inspection and enforcement.

The role of NGOs in monitoring threats and enhancing protection of the oceans.

Analysis and assessment of the geographical consequences of global governance for citizens and places who depend on the oceans for their way of life and to consider how global governance underlies and impacts on students' and other people's lives across the globe.

3.2.1.7 Globalisation critique

The impacts of globalisation to consider the benefits of growth, development, integration, stability against the costs in terms of inequalities, injustice, conflict and environmental impact.

3.2.1.8 Quantitative and qualitative skills

Students must engage with quantitative and qualitative approaches across the theme as a whole.

3.2.2 Section B: Resource security

This section of our specification focuses on the large-scale exploitation of unevenly distributed natural resources, which is one of the defining features of the present era. Increasing demand for water and energy and their critical role in human affairs leads to massive local and regional transfers of water and massive global transfers of energy. In this section students contemplate the fundamental relationships between the physical environment and human activities and wants and the relationships between people in their local, national and international communities involving themes of sustainability and conflict. They engage with these themes in relation to energy and water but may concentrate on one or other in their case studies. Study of this section offers the opportunity to exercise and develop observational skills, measurement and geospatial mapping skills, together with data manipulation and statistical skills, including those associated with and arising from fieldwork.

3.2.2.1 Resource development

Concept of a resource; resource classifications to include stock and flow resources; stock resource evaluation: measured reserves, indicated reserves, inferred resources, possible resources; natural resource development over time: exploration, exploitation, development. Concept of the resource frontier; concept of resource peak.

Sustainable resource development; environmental impact assessment (EIA) in relation to resource development projects.

3.2.2.2 Natural resource issues

Global patterns of production, consumption and trade/movements of energy; global patterns of water availability and demand.

The geopolitics of energy and water resource distributions, trade and management.

3.2.2.3 Water security

Sources of water; components of demand, water stress.

Relationship of water supply (volume and quality) to key aspects of physical geography – climate, geology and drainage.

Strategies to increase water supply to include catchment, diversion, storage and water transfers and desalination.

Environmental impacts of a major water supply scheme incorporating a major dam and/or barrage and associated distribution networks.

Strategies to manage water consumption (including reducing demand).

Sustainability issues associated with water management: virtual water trade, conservation, recycling, 'grey water' and groundwater management.

Water conflicts at a variety of scales – local, national, international.

3.2.2.4 Energy security

Sources of energy, both primary and secondary; components of demand and energy mixes in contrasting national settings.

Relationship of energy supply (volume and quality) to key aspects of physical geography – climate, geology and drainage.

Energy supplies in a globalising world: competing national interests and the role of transnational corporations in energy production, processing and distribution.

Environmental impacts of a major energy resource development such as an oil, coal or gas field and associated distribution networks.

Strategies to increase energy supply (oil and gas exploration, nuclear power and development of renewable sources).

Strategies to manage energy consumption (including reducing demand).

Sustainability issues associated with energy production, trade and consumption: acid rain, the enhanced greenhouse effect, nuclear waste and energy conservation.

3.2.2.5 Resource futures

Alternative energy and water futures and their relationship with a range of technological, economic, environmental and political developments.

The connections between energy supply and water supply as exemplified by the geography of attempts to develop the technology to allow desalination of water on a significant scale and at an economic price.

3.2.2.6 Case studies

Case study of **either** water **or** energy resource issues in a global or specified regional setting to illustrate and analyse theme(s) set out above, their implications for the setting including the relationship between resource security and human welfare and attempts to manage the resource.

Case study of a specified place to illustrate and analyse how aspects of its physical environment affects the availability and cost of **either** water **or** energy and the way in which **either** water **or** energy is used.

3.3 Unit 3: Physical geography 2

3.3.1 Section A: Water, carbon and life on earth

This section of our specification focuses on the major stores of water and carbon at or near the Earth's surface and the dynamic cyclical relationships associated with them. These are major elements in the natural environment and understanding them is fundamental to many aspects of physical geography.

This section specifies a systems approach to the study of water and carbon cycles. The content invites students to contemplate the magnitude and significance of the cycles at a variety of scales, their relevance to wider geography and their central importance for human populations. The section offers the opportunity to exercise and develop geographical skills including observation, measurement and geospatial mapping skills, together with data manipulation and statistical skills including those associated with and arising from fieldwork.

3.3.1.1 Water and carbon cycles as natural systems

Systems in physical geography: systems concepts and their application to the water and carbon cycles; inputs/outputs, energy stores/components, flows/transfers, positive/negative feedback, dynamic equilibrium.

3.3.1.2 The water cycle

Global distribution and size of major stores of water – lithosphere, hydrosphere, cryosphere and atmosphere.

Processes driving change in the magnitude of these stores over time and space, including flows and transfers: evaporation, condensation, cloud formation, causes of precipitation and cryospheric processes at hill slope, drainage basin and global scales with reference to varying timescales involved.

Drainage basins as open systems – inputs and outputs, to include precipitation, evapotranspiration and runoff; stores and flows, to include interception, surface, soil water, groundwater and channel storage; stemflow, infiltration overland flow, and channel flow; concept of water balance.

Runoff variation and the flood hydrograph.

Changes in the water cycle over time. Natural variations including storm events, seasonal changes and human impact including farming practices, land use change and water abstraction.

3.3.1.3 The carbon cycle

Global distribution, and size of major stores of carbon – lithosphere, hydrosphere, cryosphere, biosphere, atmosphere.

Factors driving change in the magnitude of these stores over time and space, including flows and transfers at plant, vegetation community and continental scales; photosynthesis, respiration, decomposition, combustion, carbon sequestration in oceans and sediments, weathering.

Changes in the carbon cycle over time, to include natural variation (including wild fires, volcanic activity) and human impact (including hydrocarbon fuel extraction and burning, farming practices, deforestation, land use changes).

The carbon budget and the impact of the carbon cycle upon land, ocean and atmosphere, including global climate.

3.3.1.4 Water, carbon, climate and life on Earth

The key role of the carbon and water stores and cycles in supporting life on Earth with particular reference to climate; the relationship between the water cycle and carbon cycle in the atmosphere; the role of feedbacks within and between cycles and their link to climate change and implications for life on Earth.

Human interventions in the carbon cycle designed to influence carbon transfers and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

3.3.1.5 Quantitative and qualitative skills

Students must engage with a range of quantitative and relevant qualitative skills, within the theme of water and carbon cycles. Students must specifically understand simple mass balance, unit conversions and the analysis and presentation of field data.

3.3.1.6 Case studies

Case study of a tropical rainforest setting to illustrate and analyse key themes in water and carbon cycles and their relationship to environmental change and human activity.

Case study of a river catchment(s) at a local scale to illustrate and analyse the key themes above, engage with field data and consider the impact of precipitation upon drainage basin stores and transfers and implications for sustainable water supply and/or flooding.

3.3.2 Section B: Ecosystems under stress

This section of our specification focuses on the biosphere and in particular the nature and functioning of ecosystems and their relationships to the nature and intensity of human activities. Study of the impact of population growth and economic development on ecosystems at various scales affords the opportunity for students to engage with fundamental contemporary people – environment issues including those relating to biodiversity and sustainability. Study of this section offers the opportunity to exercise and develop observation skills, measurement and geospatial mapping skills, together with data manipulation and statistical skills including those associated with and arising from fieldwork.

3.3.2.1 Ecosystems and sustainability

The concept of biodiversity; local and global trends in biodiversity; causes, rates and potential impacts of declining biodiversity.

Ecosystems and their importance for human populations in the light of continuing population growth and economic development; human populations in ecosystem development and sustainability.

3.3.2.2 Ecosystems and sustainability

Nature of ecosystems – their structure, energy flows, trophic levels, food chains and food webs.

Application of systems concepts to ecosystems – inputs, outputs, stores and transfers of energy and materials; concepts of biomass and net primary production.

Concepts of succession: seral stages, climatic climax, sub-climax and plagioclimax.

Mineral nutrient cycling.

Nature of terrestrial ecosystems and the inter-connections between climate, vegetation, soil and topography which produce them; ecosystem responses to changes in one or more of their components or environmental controls.

Factors influencing the changing of ecosystems, including climate change and human exploitation of the global environment.

3.3.2.3 Biomes

The concept of the biome; the global distribution of major terrestrial biomes.

The nature of two contrasting biomes: tropical rainforest and savanna grassland to include:

- the main characteristics of each biome
- ecological responses to the climate, soil and soil moisture budget – adaptations by flora and fauna
- human activity and its impact on each biome

- typical development issues in each biome to include changes in population, economic development, agricultural extension and intensification, implications for biodiversity and sustainability.

3.3.2.4 Ecosystems over time

Succession and climatic climax as illustrated by **one** of lithoseres, haloseres, psammoseres and hydroseres.

The characteristics of the climatic climax that evolves from the succession studied above.

The effects of human activity on succession – with reference to sub-climax and plagioclimax communities.

3.3.2.5 Marine ecosystems

The distribution and main characteristics of coral reef ecosystems; environmental conditions associated with reef development.

The following aspects should be examined with reference to a named, located coral reef:

Factors in the health and survival of reefs:

- Natural: Water temperature, acidity, salinity, algal blooms.
- Human activity and its impact: Major drainage basin schemes, onshore development, desalination, pollution, tourism, fishing.
- Future prospects for coral reefs.

3.3.2.6 Local ecosystems

The main characteristics of a distinctive local ecosystem (such as an area of forest conservation, mangrove conservation, managed parkland, pond, dune system); ecological responses to the climate, soil and soil moisture budget – adaptations by flora and fauna.

Local factors in ecological development and change (such as agriculture, urban change, the planned and unplanned introduction of new species).

The impacts of change and measures to manage these impacts; conservation strategies and their implementation in specific settings.

3.3.2.7 Case studies

Case study of a specified region experiencing ecological change to illustrate and analyse the nature of the change and the reasons for it, how the economic, social and political character of its community reflects its ecological setting and how the community is responding to change.

Case study of a specified ecosystem at a local scale to illustrate and analyse key themes set out above, including the nature and properties of the ecosystem, human impact upon it and the challenges and opportunities presented in its sustainable development.

3.4 Unit 4: Human geography 2

3.4.1 Section A: Changing places

This section of our specification focuses on people's engagement with places, their experience of them and the qualities they ascribe to them, all of which are of fundamental importance in their lives. Students acknowledge this importance and engage with how places are known and experienced, how their character is appreciated, the factors and processes which impact upon places and how they change and develop over time. Through developing this knowledge, students will gain understanding of the way in which their own lives and those of others are affected by continuity and change in the nature of places which are of fundamental importance in their lives.

Study of the content must be exemplified by two contrasting places, one to be local. The local place may be a locality, neighbourhood or small community either urban or rural. The contrasting place should be more distant – it could be in the same country or a different country but it must show significant contrast in terms of economic development and/or population density and/or cultural background and/or systems of political and economic organisation. Where necessary other places should be referenced to exemplify points from the content that are not covered by the two studies of the contrasting places.

Study of this section offers particular opportunities to exercise and develop qualitative (and quantitative) investigative techniques and practice-related observation, measurement and various mapping skills, together with data manipulation and statistical skills including those associated with and arising from fieldwork.

3.4.1.1 The nature and importance of places

The concept of place and the importance of place in human life and experience.

Insider and outsider perspectives on place.

Categories of place:

- near places and far places
- directly experienced places and places experienced only through the media.

Factors contributing to the character of places:

- Endogenous: location, topography, physical geography, land use, built environment and infrastructure, demographic and economic characteristics.
- Exogenous: relationships with other places.

3.4.1.2 Changing places – relationships, connections, meaning and representation

In relation to the local place within which students live or study and then at least one further contrasting place and encompassing local, regional, national, international and global scales:

- the ways in which: relationships and connections, meaning and representation, affect continuity and change in the nature of places and our understanding of place
and
- the ways in which students' own lives and those of others are affected by continuity and change in the nature of places and our understanding of place.

Relationships and connections

The impact of relationships and connections on people and place with a particular focus on:

- changing demographic and cultural characteristics
- economic change and social inequalities
- how the demographic, socio-economic and cultural characteristics of places are shaped by shifting flows of people, goods, capital and ideas at all scales from local to global
- the characteristics and impacts of external forces operating at different scales from local to global, including government policies and/or the decisions of multinational corporations
- how past and present connections, within and beyond localities, shape places and embed them in the regional, national, international and global scales.

3.4.1.3 Meaning and representation

The importance of the meanings and representations attached to places by people with a particular focus on people's lived experience of place in the past and at present.

- How humans perceive, engage with and form attachments to places and how they present and represent the world to others, including the way in which everyday place meanings are bound up with different identities, perspectives and experiences.
- How external agencies, including government, corporate bodies and community or local groups make attempts to influence or create specific place-meanings and thereby shape the actions and behaviours of individuals, groups, businesses and institutions.
- How places may be represented in a variety of different forms such as advertising copy, tourist agency material, local art exhibitions in diverse media (eg film, photography, art, story, song etc) that often give contrasting images to that presented formally or statistically such as cartography and census data.
- How both past and present processes of development can be seen to influence the social and economic characteristics of places and so be implicit in present meanings.

3.4.1.4 Quantitative and qualitative skills

Students must engage with a range of quantitative and qualitative approaches across the theme as a whole. Quantitative data, including the use of geospatial data, must be used to investigate and present place characteristics, particular weight must be given to qualitative approaches involved in representing place, and to analysing critically the impacts of different media on place meanings and perceptions. The use of different types of data should allow the development of critical perspectives on the data categories and approaches.

3.4.1.5 Place studies

Local place study exploring the developing character of a place local to the home or school/college.

Contrasting place study exploring the developing character of a contrasting and distant place.

Place studies must apply the knowledge acquired through engagement with prescribed specification content and thereby further enhance understanding of the way students' own lives and those of others are affected by continuity and change in the nature of places. Sources must include qualitative and quantitative data to represent places in the past and present.

Both place studies must focus on:

- people's lived experience of the place in the past and at present
and
- changing demographic, cultural and economic characteristics.

Suitable data sources could include some or all:

- statistics, such as census data
- maps
- geo-located data
- geospatial data, including geographic information systems (GIS) applications
- photographs
- text, from varied media
- audio-visual media
- artistic representations
- oral sources, such as interviews, reminiscences, songs etc.

3.4.2 Section B: People and contemporary urban environments

This section of our specification focuses on urban growth and change which are seemingly ubiquitous processes and present significant environmental and social challenges for human populations. The section examines these processes and challenges and the issues associated with them, in particular the potential for environmental sustainability and social cohesion. Engaging with these themes in a range of urban settings from contrasting areas of the world affords the opportunity for students to appreciate human diversity and develop awareness and insight into profound questions of opportunity, equity and sustainability. Study of this section offers the opportunity to exercise and develop observation skills, measurement and geospatial mapping skills, together with data manipulation and statistical skills, including those associated with and arising from fieldwork.

3.4.2.1 Urbanisation

Urbanisation and its importance in human affairs; global patterns of urbanisation since 1945; the emergence of megacities and world cities and their role in global and regional economies.

Economic, social, technological, political and demographic processes associated with urbanisation and urban growth.

Urban change in the more developed world:

- deindustrialisation, decentralisation, rise of service economy.
- urbanisation, suburbanisation, counter-urbanisation, urban resurgence.

Urban change in the developing world:

- rural to urban migration
- the development of modern, high tech core areas
- the contrast between formal and informal sectors of the urban space and the urban economies.

3.4.2.2 Urban forms

The development and characteristics of mega cities and world cities.

Urban characteristics in contrasting settings; physical and human factors in urban forms; spatial patterns of land use, economic inequality, social segregation and cultural diversity in contrasting urban areas, and the factors that influence them.

New urban landscapes: town centre mixed developments, cultural and heritage quarters, fortress developments, gentrified areas, edge cities.

The concept of the post-modern city.

3.4.2.3 Social and economic issues associated with urbanisation

Issues associated with economic inequality, social segregation and cultural diversity in contrasting urban areas.

Strategies to manage these issues.

3.4.2.4 Urban climate

The impact of urban forms and processes on local climate and weather.

Urban temperatures: the urban heat island effect; precipitation: frequency and intensity; fogs and thunderstorms in urban environments; wind: the effects of urban structures and layout on wind speed, direction and frequency; air quality: particulate and photo-chemical pollution.

Pollution reduction policies.

3.4.2.5 Urban waste and its disposal

Urban physical waste generation: sources of waste - industrial and commercial activity, personal consumption; relation of waste components and waste streams to economic characteristics, lifestyles and attitudes; the environmental impacts of alternative approaches to waste disposal: unregulated, recycling, recovery, incineration, burial, submergence and trade.

Comparison of incineration and landfill approaches to waste disposal in relation to a specified urban area.

3.4.2.6 Urban environments, health and wellbeing

Spatial patterns of health, mortality and morbidity in cities in contrasting areas of the world.

The relationship between environment variables eg climate, topography (drainage) and incidence of disease; air quality and health; water quality and health; the stresses of urban living and health.

The changing prevalence, distribution and seasonal incidence of malaria, a biologically transmitted disease; its links to the physical and socio-economic characteristics of environments within urban areas including impacts of environmental variables on transmission vectors; impact on health and well-being. Management and mitigation strategies.

The distribution of one named non-communicable disease (eg a specific type of cancer, coronary heart disease, asthma) within urban areas; its links to physical and socio-economic environment including impacts of lifestyles; impact on health and well-being; management and mitigation strategies.

3.4.2.7 Other contemporary urban environmental issues

Environmental problems in contrasting urban areas: atmospheric pollution, water pollution, urban drainage and dereliction.

Strategies to manage these environmental problems.

3.4.2.8 Sustainable urban developments

Impact of urban areas on local and global environments; ecological footprint of major urban areas; dimensions of sustainability: natural, physical, social and economic; nature and features of sustainable cities; concept of liveability.

Contemporary opportunities and challenges in developing more sustainable cities.

Strategies for developing more sustainable cities.

3.4.2.9 Case studies

Case studies of two contrasting urban areas to illustrate and analyse key themes set out above, to include:

- patterns of economic and social wellbeing
- the nature and impact of physical environmental conditions

with particular reference to the implications for environmental sustainability, the character of the study areas and the experience and attitudes of their populations.

3.5 Unit 5: Geographical and Fieldwork skills

3.5.1 Geographical skills checklist

Competence in geographical skills should be developed during study of the course content, in an integrated way and not as a separate theme or topic. Knowledge of the techniques on the geographical skills list is necessary for Units 1-4 in order to be familiar with techniques that may be included within these papers, as well as for Unit 5.

The following sections identify specific qualitative and quantitative skills to be studied.

3.5.1.1 Core skills

- Use and annotation of illustrative and visual material: base maps, sketch maps, diagrams, graphs, field sketches, photographs, geospatial, geo-located and digital imagery.
- Literacy – use of factual text and discursive/creative material.
- Numeracy – use of number, measure and measurement.
- Questionnaire and interview techniques.

3.5.1.2 Cartographic skills

- Atlas maps.
- Maps with located proportional symbols.
- Maps showing movement – flow lines, desire lines and trip lines.
- Maps showing spatial patterns – choropleth, isoline and dot maps.

3.5.1.3 Graphical skills

- Line graphs – simple, comparative, compound and divergent.
- Bar graphs – simple, comparative, compound and divergent.
- Scatter graphs, and the use of best fit line.
- Pie charts and proportional divided circles.
- Triangular graphs.
- Graphs with logarithmic scales.
- Dispersion diagrams.

3.5.1.4 Statistical skills

- Measures of central tendency – mean, mode, median.
- Measures of dispersion – range, inter-quartile range and standard deviation.
- Inferential and relational statistical techniques to include Spearman's rank correlation and Chi-square test and the application of significance tests.

3.5.1.5 ICT skills

- Use of remotely sensed data.
- Use of electronic databases.
- Use of innovative sources of data such as crowd sourcing and 'big data'.

3.5.2 Fieldwork skills

In Unit 5 fieldwork is assessed in two ways:

- 1 Unfamiliar fieldwork questions:** Students' general understanding of fieldwork techniques. Students are required to apply their knowledge and understanding of fieldwork to unfamiliar scenarios.
- 2 Familiar fieldwork questions:** Students' knowledge and understanding of their own fieldwork investigation, where questions will be asked about their own experiences and findings.

All students completing this qualification must engage in a personal fieldwork investigation. Ideally this would be a practical exercise but, where this is not possible, teachers and students should focus on alternative methods of data collection.

These methods must go beyond the students being presented with pre-processed data that is ready for analysis. There must be some element of planning and selecting in the investigation and data collection process.

Alternative methods of acquiring primary data could include:

- completing enquiries within the school grounds
- collecting data through interviewing people in school or in the student's home
- working with data provided by the teacher in a raw and unprocessed form, so that the students are then involved in planning the investigation with the teacher and selecting samples from the larger data set as well as considering the relevance and reliability of the data.

In the examination, questions on both familiar and unfamiliar fieldwork will be set on aspects of enquiry, including:

3.5.2.1 Planning and preparation

- Planning the enquiry, defining the aims, deciding on a location for study, establishing and justifying a hypothesis or research question and considering the most appropriate methods of data collection.
- Researching the background to the enquiry from secondary sources before embarking on any data collection.
- Considering health and safety aspects of the enquiry (the concept of a risk assessment).

3.5.2.2 Collection of data

- Methods of data collection and justification of these (from both primary and secondary sources), including reference to types of sampling used (random, systematic and structured/stratified).

3.5.2.3 Presentation of data

- Presenting data (using maps, graphs, photographs, field sketches, tables, quotations from interviews etc. as appropriate to the enquiry) with justification for their selection.

3.5.2.4 Analysis of data

- Analysing the data, using statistical techniques where appropriate – or other techniques where it is not.

3.5.2.5 Drawing conclusions and evaluating the enquiry process

- Drawing conclusions, with reference to the aims of the enquiry and accepting/rejecting the hypothesis or research question.
- Consideration of fieldwork ethics and the possible impacts of collecting, studying and representing geographical data.
- Showing how the student has developed an increased understanding of the place studied and of the geographical ideas forming the basis of the study.
- Evaluating all stages of the enquiry process and suggesting how the enquiry could have been improved.
- Considering how the enquiry could be used and/or taken forward in the future.

The total number of marks available in Unit 5 is 60 marks, with 15 marks allocated to assessment of the student's own investigation. This should be considered when planning the scale of the investigation.

4 Scheme of assessment

You can find mark schemes, and specimen papers for new courses, on our website at oxfordaqa.com/9635

These qualifications are modular. The full International A-level is intended to be taken over two years. The specification content for the International AS is half that of an International A-level.

The International AS can be taken as a stand-alone qualification or it can count towards the International A-level. To complete the International A-level, students can take the International AS in their first year and the International A2 in their second year or they can take all the units together in the same examination series at the end of the two year course.

The International AS content will be 50% of the International A-level content. International AS assessments contribute 40% of the total marks for the full International A-level qualification. The remaining 60% comes from the International A2 assessments.

The specification provides an opportunity for students to produce extended responses either in words or using open-ended calculations.

The specification content will be split across units and will include some synoptic assessment. This allows students to draw together different areas of knowledge from across the full course of study.

All materials are available in English only.

4.1 Availability of assessment units and certification

Exams and certification for this specification are available as follows:

	Availability of units		Availability of certification	
	International AS	International A2	International AS	International A-level
June 2019	✓		✓	
January 2020	✓		✓	
June 2020	✓	✓	✓	✓
January 2021 onwards	✓	✓	✓	✓
June 2021 onwards	✓	✓	✓	✓

4.2 Aims and learning outcomes

The International AS/A-level Geography presents students with a broad, coherent, up-to-date and practical course of study. Following advice from geographers at leading UK universities it provides an ideal grounding for those wishing to go on to study geography or related studies at degree level. The course provides a balance of physical and human geography and also looks to develop links between the two areas leading to a thorough and balanced understanding of the environment and its management and conservation.

Our International AS/A-level Geography should enable students to:

- develop an understanding of places and environments at a variety of scales from local to global - concentrating, wherever possible, on places close to where the students taking the course will be based
- develop an understanding of the processes taking place in the physical and human environments and shaping those environments, and start to develop an understanding of how those processes might be managed to allow sustainable development of the places in which people live
- develop a range of practical skills including working with maps, geographical information systems (GIS), data, pictures and original written sources
- develop fieldwork skills and apply these in practical enquiries and investigations
- apply their knowledge, understanding and skills to evaluate issues and make evidence-based decisions on matters of geographical importance
- appreciate the beauty and splendour of the human and physical environment and understand the need to treasure and conserve that environment.

4.3 Assessment Objectives

The exams will measure how students have achieved the following Assessment Objectives.

- AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of places, environments, concepts, processes, interactions and change, at a variety of scales.
- AO2: Apply knowledge and understanding in different contexts to interpret, analyse and evaluate geographical information and issues.
- AO3: Use a variety of relevant quantitative, qualitative and fieldwork skills to:
 - investigate geographical questions and issues
 - interpret, analyse and evaluate data and evidence
 - construct arguments and draw conclusions.

Quality of Written Communication (QWC)

Students must:

- 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 appropriate to purpose and to complex subject matter
- organise information clearly and coherently, using specialist vocabulary when appropriate.

Questions in the papers for this specification do not include specific marks for QWC. However, poor written communication may lead to lower marks due to lack of clarity in answers.

4.3.1 Assessment Objective weightings for International AS Geography

Assessment Objectives (AOs)	Unit weightings (approx %)		Overall weighting of AOs (approx %)
	Unit 1	Unit 2	
AO1	23.75	23.75	47.5
AO2	18.75	18.75	37.5
AO3	7.5	7.5	15
Overall weighting of units (%)	50	50	100

4.3.2 Assessment Objective weightings for International A-level Geography

Assessment Objectives (AOs)	Unit weightings (approx %)					Overall weighting of AOs (approx %)
	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	
AO1	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5	5.0	43
AO2	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	6.0	36
AO3	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	9.0	21
Overall weighting of components (%)	20	20	20	20	20	100

4.4 Assessment weightings

The raw marks awarded on each unit will be transferred to a uniform mark scale (UMS) to meet the weighting of the units and to ensure comparability between units sat in different exam series. Students' final grades will be calculated by adding together the uniform marks for all units. The maximum raw and uniform marks are shown in the table below.

Unit	Maximum raw mark	Percentage weighting International A-level (AS)	Maximum uniform mark
Unit 1	80	50	100
Unit 2	80	50	100
International AS qualification	160	100	200
Unit 1	80	20	100
Unit 2	80	20	100
Unit 3	80	20	100
Unit 4	80	20	100
Unit 5	60	20	100
International A-level qualification	380	100	500

5 General administration

We are committed to delivering assessments of the highest quality and have developed practices and procedures to support this aim. To ensure all students have a fair experience, we have worked with other awarding bodies in England to develop best practice for maintaining the integrity of exams. This is published through the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). We will maintain the same high standard through their use for OxfordAQA.

More information on all aspects of administration is available at oxfordaqa.com/exams-administration

For any immediate enquiries please contact info@oxfordaqa.com

Please note: We aim to respond to all email enquiries within two working days.

Our UK office hours are Monday to Friday, 8am – 5pm local time.

5.1 Entries and codes

You should use the following subject award entry codes:

Qualification title	OxfordAQA entry code
OxfordAQA International Advanced Subsidiary Geography	9636
OxfordAQA International Advanced Level Geography	9637

Please check the current version of the Entry Codes book and the latest information about making entries on oxfordaqa.com/exams-administration

You should use the following unit entry codes:

Unit 1a – GG01A

Unit 1b – GG01B

Unit 2 – GG02

Unit 3 – GG03

Unit 4 – GG04

Unit 5 – GG05

A unit entry will not trigger certification. You will also need to make an entry for the overall subject award in the series that certification is required.

Exams will be available May/June and in January.

5.2 Overlaps with other qualifications

There is overlapping content in the International AS and A-level specifications. This helps you teach the International AS and A-level together.

5.3 Awarding grades and reporting results

The International AS qualification will be graded on a five-point scale: A, B, C, D and E.

The International A-level qualification will be graded on a six-point scale: A*, A, B, C, D and E. To be awarded an A*, students will need to achieve a grade A on the full A-level qualification and 90% of the maximum uniform mark on the aggregate of the A2 units.

Students who fail to reach the minimum standard for grade E will be recorded as U (unclassified) and will not receive a qualification certificate.

We will publish the minimum raw mark needed for each grade in each unit when we issue students' results. We will report a student's unit results to schools in terms of uniform marks and unit grades and we will report qualification results in terms of uniform marks and grades.

The relationship between uniform marks and grades is shown in the table below.

Grade	Uniform mark range per unit and per qualification						
	Unit 1	Unit 2	International AS Geography	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	International A-level Geography
Maximum uniform mark	100	100	200	100	100	100	500
A*							*See note below
A	80–100	80–100	160–200	80–100	80–100	80–100	400–500
B	70–79	70–79	140–159	70–79	70–79	70–79	350–399
C	60–69	60–69	120–139	60–69	60–69	60–69	300–349
D	50–59	50–59	100–119	50–59	50–59	50–59	250–299
E	40–49	40–49	80–99	40–49	40–49	40–49	200–249

* For the award of grade A*, a student must achieve grade A in the full International A-level qualification and a minimum of 270 uniform marks in the aggregate of units 3, 4 and 5.

5.4 Resits

Unit results remain available to count towards certification, whether or not they have already been used, provided the specification remains valid. Students can resit units as many times as they like, so long as they're within the shelf-life of the specification. The best result from each unit will count towards the final qualification grade. Students who wish to repeat a qualification may do so by re-sitting one or more units.

To be awarded a new subject grade, the appropriate subject award entry, as well as the unit entry/entries, must be submitted.

5.5 Previous learning and prerequisites

There are no previous learning requirements. Any requirements for entry to a course based on this specification are at the discretion of schools.

5.6 Access to assessment: equality and inclusion

Our general qualifications are designed to prepare students for a wide range of occupations and further study whilst assessing a wide range of competences.

The subject criteria have been assessed to ensure they test specific competences. The skills or knowledge required do not disadvantage particular groups of students.

Exam access arrangements are available for students with disabilities and special educational needs.

We comply with the *UK Equality Act 2010* to make reasonable adjustments to remove or lessen any disadvantage that affects a disabled student. Information about access arrangements is issued to schools when they become OxfordAQA centres.

5.7 Working with OxfordAQA for the first time

You will need to apply to become an OxfordAQA centre to offer our specifications to your students. Find out how at oxfordaqa.com/centreapprovals

5.8 Private candidates

Centres may accept private candidates for examined units/components only with the prior agreement of OxfordAQA. If you are an approved OxfordAQA centre and wish to accept private candidates, please contact OxfordAQA at: info@oxfordaqa.com

It is expected that students undertaking this specification will carry out the fieldwork activities in section 3.5 of the specification, and private candidates should make arrangements to complete sufficient fieldwork to fulfil this expectation. As some of the marks in the AS and A-level papers will relate to fieldwork activities, students undertaking this specification must carry out the required fieldwork activities in section 3.5 of the specification. Centres accepting private candidates must ensure they have carried out this minimum requirement.

Private candidates may also enter for examined only units via the British Council; please contact your local British Council office for details.

Fairness *first*

**Thank you for choosing OxfordAQA,
the international exam board that puts
fairness first.**

**Benchmarked to UK standards, our
exams only ever test subject ability, not
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possible chance to show what they can
do and get the results they deserve.**



Get in touch

You can contact us at oxfordaqa.com/contact-us
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