

# Switching Guide

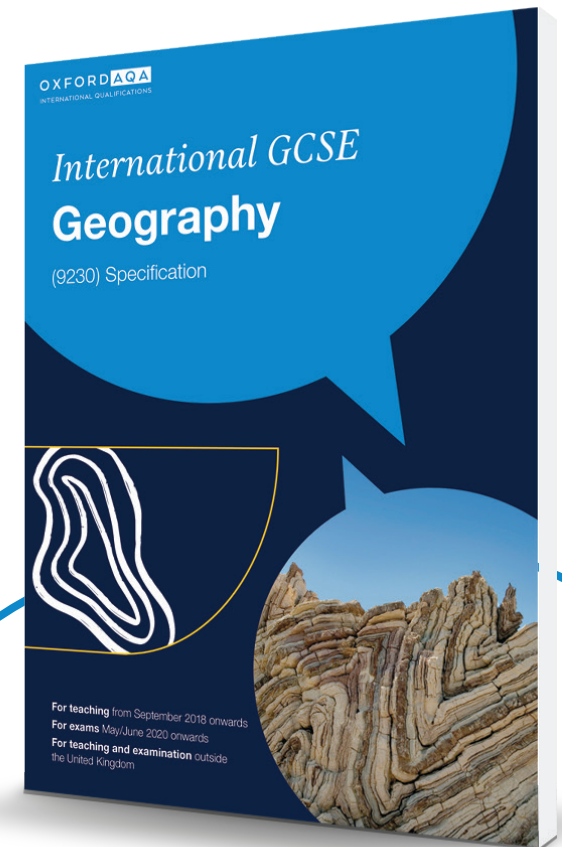
*International GCSE*

**Geography**  
(9230)

**Switching from Pearson Edexcel or  
Cambridge International to  
OxfordAQA International Qualifications**

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*puts fairness first***

## Switching to OxfordAQA International GCSE Geography (9230)

**OxfordAQA International GCSE Geography** is a globally relevant specification which includes the study of climate change and environmental sustainability, with an emphasis on fieldwork to help develop students' data and analytical skills.

Teachers will find the specification an ideal vehicle to make International GCSE Geography enjoyable and provide the right level of challenge. It allows a freedom to teach geography in a variety of ways and incorporates key themes and concepts throughout. It is the perfect platform to progress to A-level study.

### Key features:

- Explores the interactions between the man-made and natural worlds, including the crucially important global mega trends of climate change, population change and resource provision.
- The breakdown of content into three papers covering physical geography, human geography and fieldwork ensures smooth progression from GCSE to A-level.
- Content is designed to be of particular interest to students in the Middle East and Asia, with opportunities for local fieldwork to enrich students understanding.



## Changes from November 2021

We would like to remind you about an update to the International GCSE Geography (9230) specification.

We made changes to simplify the structure and improve the clarity of the specification.

We listened to feedback from our teachers that suggested that we could make the fieldwork

requirements for this subject easier to deliver to students, if we made some changes to our assessment.

We also took the opportunity to improve the clarity of the fieldwork requirements and details of

how it is assessed in the specification.

Please be assured that there are no changes to the fieldwork requirements.

We also introduced an amended assessment structure for Paper 3.

### What were the changes to paper 3?

\* Geographical and Fieldwork skills is broken down into three sections rather than two:

- Section A: Geographical skills
- Section B: Fieldwork skills (unfamiliar contexts)
- Section C: Individual fieldwork enquiry

This helps students to understand where their geographical skills, fieldwork skills in unfamiliar contexts and their individual fieldwork enquiry are being assessed in this paper. The paper was renamed 'Geographical and Fieldwork skills' to reflect this change.

The total mark for Paper 3 was reduced to 60 marks. This means the paper contributes slightly less to the overall assessment, giving slightly more weight to the longer Papers 1 and 2.

- Paper 1: Living with the physical environment - 36%
- Paper 2: Challenges in the human environment - 36%
- Paper 3: Geographical and Fieldwork skills - 28%

Papers 1 and 2 have not changed and geographical skills are still be tested across all three exam papers.

The updated specification and specimen paper can be found on our website along with the Scheme of Work and Teacher Guidance Document.

## Specification comparison

OxfordAQA specification (9230)	Pearson Edexcel specification (4GE1)	Cambridge International specification (0460)
<b>Overall structure</b>		
<p><b>Split into six topics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The challenge of natural hazards</li> <li>• The living world</li> <li>• Physical landscapes</li> <li>• Urban issues and challenges</li> <li>• The changing economic world</li> <li>• Global issues</li> </ul> <p>Geographical skills are integrated into the delivery of the content. A fieldwork enquiry is undertaken based on one specific part of the content.</p>	<p><b>Split into seven topics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• River environments</li> <li>• Coastal environments</li> <li>• Hazardous environments</li> <li>• Economic activity and energy</li> <li>• Rural environments</li> <li>• Urban environments</li> <li>• Global issues</li> </ul> <p>Geographical skills are incorporated into the content. Opportunities for fieldwork are indicated in the content.</p>	<p><b>Split into three topics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population and settlement</li> <li>• The natural environment</li> <li>• Economic development</li> </ul> <p>Geographical skills are incorporated into the content. A fieldwork enquiry is undertaken based on one specific part of the content.</p>
<p><b>The content is assessed by three written exam papers.</b></p> <p>Papers 1 and 2 are 90 minutes and are weighted at 36%.</p> <p>Paper 3 assesses geographical and fieldwork skills, it is 75 minutes and weighted at 28%.</p> <p>*See page 3 for an explanation of the changes made in 2021.</p>	<p><b>The content is assessed by two written exam papers.</b></p> <p>The first paper is 70 minutes and the second is 105 minutes, worth 40% and 60% respectively.</p> <p>Fieldwork is assessed as part of these exams.</p>	<p><b>The content is assessed by two written exams.</b></p> <p>With skills being an important component of the second paper. The first paper is 105 minutes and the second is 90 minutes, worth 45% and 27.5% respectively.</p> <p>Fieldwork and enquiry are assessed by either a written exam of 90 minutes or a coursework component. This section has a weighting of 27.5%.</p>
<p>The exams are not tiered and cover grades 9–1, with 9 being the highest.</p>	<p>The exams are not tiered and cover grades 9–1, with 9 being the highest.</p>	<p>The question papers are not tiered. Grades A*–G are available.</p>

OxfordAQA specification (9230)	Pearson Edexcel specification (4GE1)	Cambridge International specification (0460)
<b>Topic by topic</b>		
Content	Coverage	Coverage
<b>3.1 Living with the physical environment</b>		
3.1.1.1 Natural hazards	This is covered in Section A Topic 3 Hazardous environments.	This introductory section is not covered.
3.1.1.2 Tectonic hazards	This is covered in Section A Topic 3 Hazardous environments.	This is covered in Theme 2 as 2.1 Earthquakes and volcanoes.
3.1.1.3 Weather hazards	This is covered in Section A Topic 3 Hazardous environments.	There is some limited coverage of tropical storms in Theme 2 as 2.3 Coasts.
3.1.1.4 Climate change	There is coverage of the causes, effects and management in Section C Topic 7 Fragile environments and climate change.	There is no comparable section of this relevant, current, global topic. There is only mention of enhanced climate change in Theme 3 as 3.7 Environmental risks of economic development.
3.1.2.1 Ecosystems	The distribution and features of coastal ecosystems are covered in Section A, Topic 2 Coastal environments. The distribution and characteristics of ecosystems are also covered in Section A, Topic 5 Rural environments. The impact of climate change on ecosystems is covered in Section C, Topic 7 Fragile environments and climate change.	This overview of distribution and components is not covered.
3.1.2.2 Tropical rainforests	Distributions and characteristics of tropical biomes are covered in Section A, Topic 5 Rural environments. The issue of deforestation in rainforests is covered in Section C, Topic 7 Fragile environments and climate change.	The characteristics of the ecosystem and cause and effects of deforestation are covered in Theme 2 as 2.5 Climate and natural vegetation.

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3.1.2.3 Hot deserts	Distributions and characteristics of desert biomes are covered in Section A, Topic 5 Rural environments. The issue of desertification and its causes, impact and management are considered in Section C, Topic 7 Fragile environments and climate change.	The characteristics of the ecosystem are covered in Theme 2 as 2.5 Climate and natural vegetation. There is mention of desertification in Theme 3 as 3.7 Environmental risks of economic development.
3.1.3.1 Physical landscapes in Middle and Far East	This relevant background section is not covered.	This relevant background section is not covered.
3.1.3.2 Coastal landscapes	This section is covered in Section A, Topic 2 Coastal environments.	Coastal processes and landforms as well as management are covered in Theme 2 as 2.3 Coasts.
3.1.3.3 Hot desert landscapes (optional)	Distributions and characteristics of desert biomes are covered in Section A, Topic 5 Rural environments. The issue of desertification and its causes, impact and management are considered in Section C, Topic 7 Fragile environments and climate change.	This landscape affecting substantial parts of North Africa and Asia is not covered.
3.1.3.4 River landscapes (optional)	The processes and landforms section is covered in Section A, Topic 1 River environments, as the second key idea. Causes and management of flooding are present in the third key idea.	River processes and landforms as well as the causes and management of flooding are covered in Theme 2 as 2.2 Rivers.

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<b>3.2 Challenges in the human environment</b>		
3.2.1 Urban issues and challenges	<p>The first OxfordAQA key idea on urbanisation is covered in the first section of Section A, Topic 6 Urban environments.</p> <p>There is some reference to the content relating to the second OxfordAQA key idea on opportunities and challenges for cities in Lower income countries (LICs) and Newly emerging economies (NEEs) in the final part of the content linked to the second key idea in Section A, Topic 6 Urban environments. The second section of the content here considers a small part (with regard to multinational nature) of the world cities section. There is also some reference to this aspect in the third key idea on changes in cities in HIC's. However, much of the relevant content linking to areas of Asia and Africa is not covered.</p>	<p>The first OxfordAQA key idea on urbanisation is covered in Theme 1 as 1.7 Urbanisation. This also considers squatter settlements, which is a part of the second key idea. There is some coverage of the world cities section in Theme 1 as 1.6 Urban settlements with regard to the challenges.</p> <p>However, much of the relevant content linking to areas of Asia and Africa is not covered.</p>
3.2.2 The changing economic world	<p>There is some reference to the first OxfordAQA key idea on global variations in economic development in the first section of Section A, Topic 4 Economic activity and energy. This is addressed in more detail on Section C, Topic 9 Development and human welfare. The strategies to reduce the development gap given in the second OxfordAQA key idea are covered in Section C, Topic 9 Development and human welfare in the last part of the content. There is some reference to the third OxfordAQA key idea in the first section (with regard to classification of employment) and in the second section (with regard to Trans-national corporations (TNCs)) of Section A Topic 4 Economic activity and energy. TNCs are considered in more detail in Section C Topic 8 Globalisation and migration in the first section of the content.</p>	<p>There is reference to the first OxfordAQA key idea in Theme 3 as 3.1 Development. There is reference to the classification of employment here and TNCs with some links to the second OxfordAQA key idea.</p>

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3.2.3.1 Water and 3.2.3.2 energy resources (optional)	<p>There is some reference to water supply and shortage and surplus in Section A, Topic 1 River environments, in the third section with some link to the first OxfordAQA key idea. However, this addresses a predominantly local scale, with some reference to global, rather than the global and national scale (linked to LIC or NEE) of the OxfordAQA content. There is also a small reference to water resources as part of the first key idea in Section A, Topic 5 Rural environments.</p> <p>There is some reference to the rise in global demand for energy in Section A Topic 4 Economic activity and energy (final section) linking to the first key idea of the OxfordAQA content.</p> <p>The renewable and non-renewable energy resources section here links with the second key idea of the OxfordAQA content. There is also a small reference to energy resources as part of the first key idea in Section A, Topic 5 Rural environments.</p>	<p>There is some reference to water shortages in Theme 3 as 3.6 Water. However, the global scale is not emphasised as in the OxfordAQA content. Some strategies to overcome shortages are covered here, linking to part of the second OxfordAQA key idea.</p> <p>There is some reference to the importance of renewable and non-renewable sources of energy in this section which links to the second OxfordAQA key idea.</p>



OxfordAQA specification (9230)	Pearson Edexcel specification (4GE1)	Cambridge International specification (0460)
3.2.3.3 Population change and 3.2.3.4 communication (optional)	<p>The first key idea of the OxfordAQA content on population is partly addressed in the final section of Section C, Topic 9 Development and human welfare, whilst the second OxfordAQA key idea on population (migration) is considered in the final section of Section C, Topic 8 Globalisation and migration. The relationship between population and resources is also considered in Section A, Topic 4 Economic activity and energy.</p> <p>The relevant first key idea on communication of the OxfordAQA content is not covered. There are some elements of the second one that are covered such as links to trade, information technologies and tourism in the first two parts of Section C Topic 8 Globalisation and migration.</p>	<p>The first key idea of the OxfordAQA content on population is partly addressed in Theme 1 as 1.1 Population dynamics. The second OxfordAQA key idea is partly addressed in Theme 1 as 1.2 Migration, although there is not always an international focus.</p> <p>The relevant first key idea on communication of the OxfordAQA content is not covered. There are some elements of the second one that are covered although there is a significantly different emphasis such as in Theme 3 with tourism being covered in 3.4.</p>

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