3.1 Physical geography

3.1.1 Water and carbon cycles

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.

3.1.4 Glacial systems and landscapes

This section of our specification focuses on glaciated landscapes. These are dynamic environments in which landscapes continue to develop through contemporary processes but which mainly reflect former climatic conditions associated with the Pleistocene era. 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 glaciated regions and the challenges they present for human habitation. 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.

3.1.5 Hazards

This optional 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.

3.2 Human geography

3.2.1 Global systems and global 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.

3.2.2 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 embedded in two contrasting places, one to be local. The local place may be a locality, neighbourhood or small community either urban or rural. A contrasting place is likely to be 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. The place studies complement the requirement to embed the study of content in two 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.

3.2.3 Contemporary urban environments

This optional 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

20% of the A Level is an independent fieldwork investigation.

Here's some advice about this

http://www.aqa.org.uk/news/a-level-geography-nea-guidance-for-the-independent-investigation