

Get ready for Geography

About the subject

The course is also very skills based and will enable you to develop a very rich base of transferrable skills which are highly sought after by employers and universities alike. These include data management and analysis, investigation, research skills, geographical information systems, cartographic, graphical and critical analysis. You will complete four compulsory days of fieldwork, including a residential field trip and produce your own individual investigation based on an issue relating to the course.

A group of Geographers have also recently returned from an exciting trip to Iceland which was a life-changing opportunity to experience tectonic and glacial processes and extend students geographical understanding.

Due to the emphasis the subject places on skills and the diversity of the subject, Geography is a 'door opener' and prepares students well to embark on a career in a range of fields, including those in the education, commerce, industry, law, finance, transport, tourism and public sectors.

Beyond all this, Geography encourages ways of seeing, thinking and being in the world that make geographers not only eminently employable but also gain a wide perspective and understanding of the world which takes them both physically and emotionally to new places. I believe it's a transformative subject which stays with you for life and which holds value beyond that measured in results- although these are good too and there is a consistent 100% pass rate in the subject.

Some specifics:

Specific entry requirements- GCSE Grade 5 or above in Geography and in English and Maths
Geography requires extended writing and numerical/statistical skills so proficiency at Grade 5 or above is needed in English and Maths.

Teaching – Course is taught by Sarah King, who has a PhD in Geography from the University of Durham and has taught Geography across the key stages, and at University level for many years.

Learning – The course offers a wide variety of learning methods, including group work, presentations, independent research, fieldwork and the use of ICT and GIS (Geographical Information Systems). Learning is interactive and engaging and Geography is a subject which demands hands on, practical and investigative approaches as well as the academic rigour, which makes it such a high-status subject.

The course- Specification – The specification followed is Edexcel A Level Geography (2016). The full specification, sample examination materials and rationale for the new course are all available on the website.

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/demo/en/qualifications/edexcel-a->

levels/geography-2016.html [<https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/demo/en/qualifications/e-dexcel-a-levels/geography-2016.html>]

Assessment- The qualification is assessed by three exams- one physical (30%), one human (30%) and one based on a geographical issue linking the course content (20%). Students complete an Independent Investigation (coursework) for the remaining 20%.

Coursework – Students complete an investigation of their own which links to the course content and produce a 3000-4000 words project. This is a brilliant opportunity for students to explore an area of interest and undertake their own active research on a particular issue/ place. In the process, students gain a wide range of skills highly valued by employers and academic institutions alike- developing working knowledge of research methods, data presentation and analysis, production of a report, critical evaluation skills and ability to use ICT and GIS.

Fieldwork – To pass the course, all students must complete 4 days compulsory fieldwork. 3 of these days will be completed on a residential fieldtrip to Castlehead Field Studies Centre near Grange over Sands in Cumbria. The students receive expert tuition to support their independent investigations and gain a detailed insight into research methods to help form their own study. As well as being academically invaluable in developing a wide range of geographical and investigative skills, it is one of the most enjoyable experiences which students remember for a long time! There is a cost implication in the region of £240 (2018 price). There is also a local fieldwork day in Barnsley in which students can gain experience of investigating their local place using a range of research methodologies.





Opportunities – In the past year, there have been opportunities for our Geographers to have masterclasses from local experts linking into the course, including a question and answer session on Barnsley’s regeneration and a workshop on archives and GIS from Experience Barnsley. There may be opportunity to participate in an overseas trip to Iceland if there is the demand.

Skills – The course has a wide range of skills embedded and as such is challenging but is also a great opportunity and makes Geographers some of the most sought after and employable students. Students will develop an extensive variety of transferrable skills including, research and investigative skills, numerical and statistical skills, practical fieldwork and teamwork skills, analytical skills, cartographic skills, ICT and GIS skills to name just some!

Your tasks

Introduction to Geography at Barnsley College [<https://www.barnsleysixthformcollege.co.uk/wp/index.php?gf-download=2020%2F05%2Fenrollment-info.pdf&form-id=3&field-id=10&hash=343660bf6891e39b52d3b80f133d6df4580dce5b9d3eb5c2c8a58479c0dfc82a>]

Our first topic will be tectonics, which is a popular GCSE unit and provides a good transition between GCSE Geography and A Level. You will find uploaded here the ‘enrolment task’ [<https://www.barnsleysixthformcollege.co.uk/wp/index.php?gf-download=2020%2F05%2Fenrollment-task.pdf&form-id=3&field-id=10&hash=786486ea8b4ffc6abafb6c6ad1e3beecf9494716b83626b952d221a66cc4096f>] booklet which summarises the first enquiry question. Please read, highlight and complete the ‘now test yourself’ questions 1-5 ready for the first week teaching. Complete these on separate lined paper with your name on.

Essential reading

To get a full understanding of the course content, structure and examination, you should take a look at the official specification materials, which provide a wide range of links to books and other materials at:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-a-levels/geography-2016.html>

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Useful websites and other resources

There are a great selection of Geography related websites and podcasts- take a look at 'websites that will rock your world' at:

<https://tutorful.co.uk/blog/learning-geography-useful-websites-and-resources-that-will-rock-your-world> [https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=https%3a%2f%2ftutorful.co.uk%2fblog%2flearning-geography-useful-websites-and-resources-that-will-rock-your-world&c=E,1,WnmA6pRwG-jAWK78shzr6Lb99iX_tO5csj5-_VvXzGBtPcfm-y8bXQPU_aM2EsTsK7tjcnPxFpeeOoePSVJOZTaCoI0rHYakaUc0YQXT80Iz00kF&typo=1]

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Any questions?

Email us on info@barnsley.ac.uk

Call us on **01226 216 123**