

Year 11 Geography

Year 11 completes OCR GCSE Geography B and builds deliberately on the substantive and disciplinary knowledge developed through KS3 and Year 10. Students work with increasing independence, retrieving knowledge accurately, selecting precise place-specific evidence, interpreting unfamiliar resources and constructing justified geographical arguments. Across the year, recurring concepts including interdependence, inequality, sustainability, change, place, scale, risk and human-environment interaction are connected explicitly, preparing students for the synoptic demands of Geographical Exploration (Paper 3) and the terminal examinations.

Term 1: Global Hazards – Our Natural World / Paper 1 / Topic 1

Learning Objectives

Students investigate why tectonic and weather hazards occur, why their impacts vary between places and how risk can be reduced.

Key learning:

- Explain the global distribution of tectonic hazards and how slab pull and ridge push contribute to plate movement.
- Explain processes at constructive, destructive and conservative plate boundaries and relate these to earthquakes and volcanoes.
- Analyse how magnitude, location, development, governance and preparedness influence hazard impacts.
- Compare impacts and responses using contrasting named examples.
- Explain the formation and characteristics of tropical storms and other extreme weather hazards.
- Evaluate monitoring, prediction, protection and planning as approaches to reducing risk.
- Interpret hazard maps, graphs, photographs and numerical data and apply knowledge to unfamiliar contexts.

What previous knowledge is required?

Year 9 Natural Hazards provides the principal foundation through plate tectonics, plate boundaries, earthquakes, volcanoes, contrasting hazard impacts and approaches to risk reduction. Year 8 Development supports understanding of why wealth, infrastructure and governance affect vulnerability and capacity to cope. Year 10 Distinctive Landscapes strengthens physical-process explanations, while Sustaining Ecosystems develops understanding of vulnerability and human-environment interaction. Existing map, graph and numerical skills allow students to progress from describing hazards to analysing risk and evaluating responses.

How will this term's content help with future learning?

Global Hazards provides a strong synoptic bridge to Changing Climate because atmospheric processes, extreme weather, vulnerability and risk recur in both topics. It links to Dynamic Development because hazard impacts are shaped by income, governance, infrastructure and resilience, and to Urban Futures because rapid urbanisation can increase exposure. For Paper 3, students interpret unfamiliar evidence, compare stakeholder priorities and judge management effectiveness rather than assuming hazards can simply be prevented.

Common Misconceptions

- Tectonic plates move mainly because of convection currents rather than slab pull and ridge push.
- Earthquakes only occur at destructive plate boundaries.
- A higher-magnitude hazard always causes greater human impacts.
- Natural hazards become disasters solely because of their physical magnitude.

- Tropical storms form directly on the Equator.
- Prediction can identify the exact time and location of an earthquake.
- Wealthier countries are unaffected by major hazards.

National Curriculum / Specification

OCR GCSE Geography B J384 – Our Natural World (01), Topic 1: Global Hazards. Students study weather and tectonic hazards, plate movement including slab pull and ridge push, contrasting impacts and responses, vulnerability, risk reduction and associated geographical skills. This contributes to Paper 1 and supports synoptic assessment in Paper 3.

Term 2: Changing Climate – Our Natural World / Paper 1 / Topic 2

Learning Objectives

Students investigate how and why climate has changed from the Quaternary period to the present and assess evidence for natural and human causes before examining contemporary impacts.

Key learning:

- Describe patterns of climate change from the Quaternary period to the present.
- Assess the reliability of evidence including ice cores, sea-ice extent, temperature records, paintings and written sources.
- Explain natural causes including orbital change, solar variation and volcanic activity.
- Explain the natural greenhouse effect and how human activity enhances it.
- Analyse social, economic and environmental impacts of 21st-century climate change globally and within the UK.
- Interpret climate graphs, time-series data and quantitative evidence.
- Evaluate evidence and distinguish between correlation, cause, uncertainty and prediction.

What previous knowledge is required?

Year 7 Weather, Climate & Extreme Environments introduced weather and climate, the greenhouse effect and human influence on climate. Later KS3 work revisited climate change, natural variability and evidence. Year 10 Sustaining Ecosystems develops understanding of climate as a control on ecosystems and environmental vulnerability, while Distinctive Landscapes links climate to flooding and coastal risk. Students also bring established graphical and numerical skills, including percentage change, averages, range and interpretation of climate data.

How will this term's content help with future learning?

Changing Climate consolidates systems thinking across the GCSE. It connects back to Global Hazards through extreme weather, risk and vulnerability, and forward to Resource Reliance because climate change can alter food production, water availability and energy demand. It also links to Sustaining Ecosystems through changing habitats and UK in the 21st Century through weather, water stress and economic impacts. Paper 3 requires students to use evidence critically, recognise uncertainty and evaluate responses.

Common Misconceptions

- Weather and climate mean the same thing.
- Climate has never changed naturally before recent human influence.
- The greenhouse effect is entirely caused by humans and is always harmful.
- Ozone depletion is the main cause of global warming.
- A single cold weather event disproves long-term climate change.

- All climate evidence is equally reliable.
- Climate change affects every place and population in the same way.

National Curriculum / Specification

OCR GCSE Geography B J384 – Our Natural World (01), Topic 2: Changing Climate. Students study Quaternary climate change, evidence and its reliability, natural causes, the natural and enhanced greenhouse effect, and 21st-century social, economic and environmental impacts at UK and global scales. Skills contribute to Paper 1 and synoptic Paper 3.

Term 3: Resource Reliance – People and Society / Paper 2 / Topic 4

Learning Objectives

Students investigate dependence on food, water and energy, why demand can exceed supply, and food security in depth.

Key learning:

- Explain why rising population, consumption and development increase demand for food, water and energy.
- Analyse how human activity modifies environments to increase resource supply.
- Explain physical and human factors affecting food security and interpret global patterns of access to food.
- Compare Malthusian and Boserupian views of population and food supply.
- Apply detailed evidence from a named country to changing food availability and security.
- Evaluate local and national strategies for improving food security.
- Assess environmental, social and economic sustainability of changing consumption, production and technology.

What previous knowledge is required?

Year 8 Food provides the direct foundation through food production, trade, food miles, sustainability and resource insecurity. Year 9 Water Resources develops physical and economic scarcity, supply and demand, while Globalisation supports understanding of trade and interconnected supply chains. Year 10 Dynamic Development adds links between poverty, trade, investment and resource access, while Sustaining Ecosystems develops understanding of environmental limits and sustainability.

How will this term's content help with future learning?

Resource Reliance is deliberately synoptic. It links to Dynamic Development because poverty and resource insecurity can reinforce one another; to Urban Futures because growing cities increase demand; and to Changing Climate because altered temperature and precipitation affect production and supply. The topic strengthens evaluation of trade-offs between food security, development and environmental sustainability, central to Paper 3 decision making and stakeholder evaluation.

Common Misconceptions

- Resource scarcity always means that a resource is physically absent.
- Population growth is the only reason demand can exceed supply.
- Food security simply means producing more food.
- Countries experiencing hunger do not produce or export food.
- Malthus and Boserup made the same prediction about population and food supply.
- Technological solutions are automatically sustainable.
- Increasing food production benefits all stakeholders equally.

National Curriculum / Specification

OCR GCSE Geography B J384 – People and Society (02), Topic 4: Resource Reliance. Students study growing demand for food, water and energy, environmental modification, food security, Malthusian and Boserupian ideas, a named country and strategies for sustainable food security. This contributes to Paper 2 and synoptic Paper 3.

Term 4: UK in the 21st Century – People and Society / Paper 2 / Topic 3

Learning Objectives

Students investigate the UK's changing human and physical geography and its place in an increasingly interconnected world.

Key learning:

- Analyse UK patterns of population density, land use, rainfall and relief and issues such as housing pressure and water stress.
- Interpret population pyramids and migration data to explain population change, ageing and ethnic diversity.
- Analyse economic change since 2001, including employment structure and economic hubs.
- Apply detailed evidence to changes in a named UK place or economic hub.
- Examine the UK's political role through international organisations and a global conflict.
- Examine aspects of UK cultural influence, including media and contributions of ethnic groups.
- Use maps, statistics and unfamiliar resources to evaluate how far the UK is changing and globally connected.

What previous knowledge is required?

This unit draws together knowledge accumulated across KS3 and Year 10. Year 7 Our Geography provides UK locational knowledge, while Population develops demographic structure, migration and population change. KS3 Development and Globalisation provide the language of economic change and international connections. Year 10 Urban Futures is especially important through London, migration, inequality, infrastructure and urban change; Dynamic Development supports comparison between the UK and places at different levels of development.

How will this term's content help with future learning?

UK in the 21st Century synthesises much of People and Society. Population change connects to Urban Futures; economic restructuring and global connections link to Dynamic Development and Resource Reliance; environmental pressures connect to Changing Climate and Sustaining Ecosystems. As the final substantive topic, it transitions into cumulative revision and Paper 3, requiring students to combine evidence, work across scales and evaluate interacting demographic, economic, political and cultural processes.

Common Misconceptions

- The UK population is evenly distributed.
- An ageing population simply means that everyone is living longer.
- Migration is the only cause of UK population change.
- Ethnic diversity is distributed evenly across the UK.
- Deindustrialisation means that manufacturing has completely disappeared.
- London is the UK's only important economic hub.
- The UK's global influence is only economic or military rather than also political and cultural.

National Curriculum / Specification

OCR GCSE Geography B J384 – People and Society (02), Topic 3: UK in the 21st Century. Students study the UK's physical and human characteristics, population change, ageing and diversity, economic change and hubs, and the UK's political and cultural influence. Geographical skills contribute to Paper 2 and synoptic Paper 3.

Terms 5–6: Skills Practice, Synoptic Revision and Examination Preparation – Papers 1, 2 and 3

Learning Objectives

Students consolidate the full GCSE course and increasingly practise independent retrieval, application and examination decision-making. Revision is diagnostic rather than simple repetition.

Key learning:

- Retrieve and connect knowledge across all eight substantive topics and fieldwork.
- Apply case-study and place-specific evidence selectively to examination questions.
- Practise cartographic, graphical, numerical and statistical skills in familiar and unfamiliar contexts.
- Interpret resources, identify patterns and anomalies and support conclusions with evidence.
- Refine responses to command words and low-, medium- and high-tariff questions.
- Evaluate fieldwork methods, data quality, conclusions and improvements.
- Practise Paper 3 synoptic thinking and decision making by weighing evidence and reaching justified conclusions.

What previous knowledge is required?

Students require the substantive knowledge developed across Years 10 and 11, including secure case studies and examples, together with disciplinary skills built cumulatively from KS3. This includes map and photograph interpretation, graphical and numerical analysis, fieldwork enquiry, use of evidence and extended geographical writing. Year 10 physical and human fieldwork is particularly important because fieldwork understanding is assessed across the qualification.

How will this term's content help with future learning?

This phase prepares students directly for the terminal OCR GCSE examinations while strengthening long-term geographical thinking. Cumulative retrieval secures knowledge and synoptic practice teaches students to transfer understanding to unfamiliar places and resources. Students refine their ability to select relevant evidence, make connections, evaluate competing arguments and reach justified conclusions. These habits also provide a strong foundation for A-level Geography and other post-16 study.

Common Misconceptions

- Revision is mainly rereading notes rather than active retrieval and application.
- Every case-study fact should be included regardless of the question.
- Paper 3 requires learning a separate body of content.
- A high-tariff answer is improved simply by writing more.
- Evaluation means listing advantages and disadvantages without weighing them.
- Fieldwork questions only assess the exact investigations completed in school.
- Unfamiliar resources can be answered without linking them to geographical knowledge.

National Curriculum / Specification

OCR GCSE Geography B J384 – cumulative preparation for Our Natural World (01), People and Society (02) and Geographical Exploration (03). Students consolidate all substantive topics, fieldwork and cartographic, graphical, numerical and statistical skills. Paper 3 is synoptic and requires students to connect knowledge, interpret unfamiliar evidence and complete decision-making tasks.