

## GCSE Geography Fieldwork

### Getting started

For teachers new to delivering GCSE Geography, organising fieldwork can be a daunting task. Effective fieldwork enquiries that address the examination requirements should not be complicated or difficult because candidates will have to remember the key features of these enquiries and use this information correctly under examination conditions.

Before getting into detailed planning, consider the following five steps;

1. **You must comply with the requirements of the specification.** There are seven GCSE Geography specifications available from four Examination Boards, and the requirements are not the same for each course. AQA and OCR (A & B specs) allow centres to derive their fieldwork enquiries from any part of the specification. Edexcel (A & B specs) are more prescriptive and the enquiries must be based on Rivers or Coasts, and on Central/Inner City areas or Rural settlements. WJEC (A & B specs) are also prescriptive requiring one enquiry to have a methodological approach and the other to have a conceptual approach.

AQA specification pages 24-25

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/geography/gcse/geography-8035/introduction>

OCR A specification page 15

<https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/207306-specification-accredited-gcse-geography-a-j383.pdf>

OCR B specification page 19

<https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/207307-specification-accredited-gcse-geography-b-j384.pdf>

Edexcel A specification pages 27-29

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

Edexcel B specification pages 26-28

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/geography-b-2016.html>

WJEC A specification pages 24-

26 <https://www.wjec.co.uk/media/mlyil2jr/wjec-gcse-geography-spec-from-2016-e.pdf>

WJEC B specification pages 18-23

<https://www.wjec.co.uk/media/5ofdo23l/gcse-geog-b-spec.pdf>

2. **Consider possible constraints** that might affect your fieldwork planning. When can you take your students out of school to carry out their fieldwork? Are there likely to be clashes with timetabled events? Will other departments have work or activities going on at the time you want to take students out of school? Can you get the staffing requirements needed to work safely in the field with students? Will the fieldwork 'fit in' to your teaching of units so that the enquiries are tackled at the best possible time? Do you have the equipment that might be required?
3. **Look at the enquiry sequence** in the specification. There are six stages to the enquiry sequence and teachers and students must address these stages differently. The AQA website has an excellent section dealing with this and, even if you are not an AQA centre, it is worth looking at this resource because students are examined on the strands making up the enquiry sequence.  
<https://www.aqa.org.uk/resources/geography/gcse/geography/teach/fieldwork-enquiry-process>
4. **Think about the 'end game'**. How will students record their fieldwork enquiries? Whatever approach you use, this should not be too complicated, and it must aid the revision process. Examination Boards do not have specific requirements regarding the writing-up of the enquiries so you are free to adopt any approach that will work for your students.
5. **Consider the skills** that will be incorporated into the enquiries. The skills listed in the specifications are the same for all GCSE Geography courses and they can be assessed within any of the examination papers. If you

plan for particular skills to be delivered through fieldwork you may not have to teach them in the classroom.

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