

“An understanding of the natural world and what’s in it is a source of not only great curiosity, but great fulfilment”

David Attenborough

Humanities at Noel-Baker Academy

The Humanities Faculty at Noel-Baker Academy is committed in ensuring that all pupils make excellent progress in History, Geography and RS, through experiencing expert knowledge rich teaching, which engages and motivates them to work hard and succeed. Along with the knowledge and understanding students develop through the various subject areas and wide basis of topics covered therein, they will acquire essential expertise, which will be invaluable in preparing them for adulthood.

Geography at Noel-Baker Academy

We live in a world of amazing beauty, infinite complexity and rigorous challenge. Geography is the subject which opens the door to this dynamic world and prepares each one of us for the role of a global citizen in the 21st century. Through studying geography, students of all ages begin to appreciate how places and landscapes are formed, how people and environments interact, what consequences arise from our everyday decisions, and what a diverse range of cultures and societies exist and interconnect.

Geography is a subject which builds on young people’s own experiences, helping them to formulate questions, develop their intellectual skills and find answers to issues affecting their lives. It introduces them to investigative tools such as maps and fieldwork supporting them to analyse and understand the world around them. It opens their eyes to the beauty and wonder around them and ensures that they appreciate the complexity of attitudes and values which shape the way we use and misuse the environment. Through Geography, students learn to value and care for the planet and all its inhabitants.

Geography at Noel-Baker Academy is the bridge between natural and social sciences.

Year 7 Geography

Unit 1: People, Cities and Wealth

The first unit in Year 7 introduces key themes around Human Geography such as: population, population density, urbanisation and development. The opening sequence of lessons checks for understanding of core knowledge acquired as part of the Key Stage 2 Geography Curriculum. Students will develop this foundation knowledge to broaden their geographical vocabulary and understanding of key concepts, which will later be applied to a current case study. In this unit students will explore individual accounts of migration which include an example of forced migration from Eritrea to Europe, and voluntary migration from the UK to Canada. The case study Bengaluru, Karnataka (India) is the main focus for application of knowledge, as students will make comparisons between rural and urban living, and the challenges that can arise from urbanisation.

Unit 2: Tectonic Hazards

The second unit explores the fascinating tectonic processes which shape our world. Through analysing real-world case studies such as the Fuego Volcano in Guatemala (2019) and the Japanese Earthquake and Tsunami (2011), students will gain a greater understanding of the causes and impacts of a range of tectonic hazards. This topic will build on the students existing knowledge around plate tectonics they will have gained as part of the Key Stage 2 Geography curriculum. This unit introduces students to fieldwork skills including data collection and data presentation.

Unit 3: Weather, Climate and Wildfires

Weather plays an important role in our lives. It influences how we dress, what we can do outdoors, and even our moods. This unit investigates the causes of weather, how we measure the weather, and describes the differences between weather and climate. Students investigate how and why the climate has changed in the past and how humans are causing the unprecedented climate change we are experiencing today. The causes and effects of wildfires in Australia (2020) are examined to understand a real life effect of climate change. In this unit, students develop fieldwork skills including data collection, presentation and analysis through an on-site microclimate study.

Year 8 Geography

Unit 1: Globalisation

This unit builds on concepts introduced in Year 7 (Unit 1) where students explore the growth and development of cities in the UK. The unit 'Globalisation' extends this knowledge and understanding to consider the interconnectedness of people and businesses across the world that eventually leads to global cultural, political and economic integration. Looking at food, clothes, transport and flower farming, we look to understand how globalisation has altered, connected and benefited communities around the world.

Unit 2: Extreme Environments

Having gained an insight into the themes of climate and weather in Year 7 (Unit 3), students will further explore the processes which dictate the world's climate. They will see how the climate can influence the environments around the world, and lead to the formation of unique and wondrous biomes. We will explore the Tropical Rainforest, a hot and humid biome focusing on Africa and Indonesia, cold environments near the Poles, mountainous regions such as Tibet and Peru and desert environments (both hot and cold) around the world. Students will study why the area is extreme, how plants and animals have adapted to survive there and how these fragile environments are managed sustainably.

Unit 3: Development

Building on the knowledge students will have gained around economic and social development in Year 7 (Unit 1) and Year 8 (Unit 1), students will look at why some countries are wealthier and more developed than others. Through the analysis of a range of contrasting case studies, students will gain a greater understanding of controversial issues such as gender inequality, colonialism and see how political factors can influence the development of countries. Examples of case studies examined include Saudi Arabia (Western Asia); Nairobi, Kenya (Africa); and Haiti (North America).

Year 9 Geography

Unit 1: Coast and Climate Change

Having introduced the issue of climate change in Year 7 (Unit 3), we will take a closer look at this controversial issue further and the potential impacts it can have on coastal areas. The aim of this module is to explore coasts as dynamic and changing systems. In order to understand how coastal areas are managed, students first learn coastal processes. Management is then studied through Mangrove forests in the Philippines, coastal defences at Skegness and the issues surrounding Miami, Florida.

Unit 2: The Energy Issue

Students will examine a variety of different energy resources, exploring the benefits and drawbacks to each. Through investigating geographical data, we will identify who the biggest consumers and producers are and what this means for the future security of different nations. Climate change is developed further with the science behind the emissions associated with fossil fuels and the greenhouse effect explored in detail. Case studies include Grangemouth in Scotland and sustainable cities in Hyllie, Sweden. Students develop their understanding of how interconnected and reliant countries are on each other and how together, solutions can be found to the pressing issue of climate change.

Unit 3: Rivers and Floods

Rivers play an important role in shaping the physical landscape of areas, as well as influencing people's lives. Throughout this topic, we will take a journey from the source to the mouth of a river, exploring the different and beautiful landforms it creates along the way. Understanding processes again ensures students understand how to best manage the results of flooding. Students will appreciate how rivers can both benefit and threaten populations, through studying Monsoon floods in Kerala, India, contrasting with local flooding from the Derwent/Trent confluence.

Key Stage 4 Geography

Pupils will sit AQA GCSE Geography at the end of Year 11. The GCSE course enables pupils to build on the knowledge they have gained from Key Stage 3, exploring case studies in the United Kingdom (UK), higher income countries (HICs), newly emerging economies (NEEs) and lower income countries (LICs). Topics of study include climate change, poverty, deprivation, global shifts in economic power and the challenge of sustainable resource use. Students are also encouraged to understand their role in society, by considering different viewpoints, values and attitudes.

Students will sit three written exam papers at the end of Year 11, each covering different aspects of Geography.

Paper 1: Living with the Physical Environment (1 hour 30 minute written exam)

This unit is concerned with the dynamic nature of physical processes and systems, and human interaction with them in a variety of places and at a range of scales. The aims of this unit are to develop an understanding of the tectonic, geomorphological, biological and meteorological processes and features in different environments, and the need for management strategies governed by sustainability and consideration of the direct and indirect effects of human interaction with the Earth and the atmosphere.

Paper 1:

- Section A: The Challenge of Natural Hazards (Haiti/L'Aquila earthquakes, hurricane Katrina and global warming).
- Section B: The Living World (Sahara and Great Western hot deserts and The Amazon tropical rainforest).
- Section C: Physical Landscapes in the UK (Holderness coast and Medmerry and the River Tees/Jubilee River).

Paper 2: Challenges in the Human Environment (1 hour 30 minute written exam)

This unit is concerned with human processes, systems and outcomes and how these change both spatially and temporally. They are studied in a variety of places and at a range of scales and must include places in various states of development, such as higher income countries (HICs), lower income countries (LICs) and newly emerging economies (NEEs). The aims of this unit are to develop an understanding of the factors that produce a diverse variety of human

environments; the dynamic nature of these environments that change over time and place; the need for sustainable management; and the areas of current and future challenge and opportunity for these environments.

Paper 2:

- Section A: Urban issues and challenges (Rio De Janeiro and London).
- Section B: The changing economic world (Nigeria, UK and Jamaica)
- Section C: The challenge of Resource Management (Food and resources in the UK).

Paper 3: Geographical Applications (1 hour 15 minute written exam)

Paper 3:

- Section A: Issue evaluation (pre-release on an unspecified topic which changes each year, released 6 weeks before the exam).
- Section B: Fieldwork (Derby Roundhouse regeneration success and coastal management effectiveness in Hornsea, Holderness).

The Geographical applications unit is designed to be synoptic in that students will be required to draw together knowledge, understanding and skills from the full course of study. It is an opportunity for students to show their breadth of understanding and an evaluative appreciation of the interrelationships between different aspects of geographical study.

The issue section contributes a critical thinking and problem-solving element to the assessment structure. The assessment will provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate geographical skills and applied knowledge and understanding by looking at a particular issue(s) derived from the specification using secondary sources. The issue(s) will arise from any aspect of the compulsory sections of the subject content but may extend beyond it through the use of resources in relation to specific unseen contexts. Students develop knowledge and understanding of physical geography themes in unit 3.1 and human geography themes in unit 3.2.

This section is synoptic and the assessment will require students to use their learning of more than one of the themes in units 3.1 and 3.2 so that they can analyse a geographical issue at a range of scales, consider and select a possible option in relation to the issue(s) and justify their decision. A resource booklet will be available twelve weeks before the date of the exam so that students have the opportunity to work through the resources, enabling them to become familiar with the material. Students will not be allowed to take the original resource booklet into the examination room but will be issued with a clean copy in the exam. Sources could include maps at different scales, diagrams, graphs, statistics, photographs, satellite images, sketches, extracts from published materials, and quotes from different interest groups.

Assessment will consist of a series of questions related to a contemporary geographical issue(s), leading to a more extended piece of writing which will involve an evaluative judgement. Students will apply knowledge and understanding to interpret, analyse and evaluate the information and issue(s) in the pre-release resources booklet and the question paper. They will also use geographical skills to set the issue(s) in context and to examine conflicting viewpoints about the issue(s).

Students will develop a critical perspective on the issue(s) studied, consider the points of view of the stakeholders involved, make an appraisal of the advantages and disadvantages, and evaluate the alternatives. The exam will also require students to consider physical and human interrelationships and to make reasoned justifications for proposed solutions in terms of their likely impact on both people and the physical environment.

In Fieldwork students need to undertake two geographical enquiries, each of which must include the use of primary data, collected as part of a fieldwork exercise. There should be a clear link between the subject content and geographical enquiries, and the enquiries can be based on any part of the content addressed in units 3.1 and 3.2.

For this exam students will have to identify the titles of their individual enquiries. Students will be expected to:

1. Apply knowledge and understanding to interpret, analyse and evaluate information and issues related to geographical enquiry

2. Select, adapt and use a variety of skills and techniques to investigate questions and issues and communicate findings in relation to geographical enquiry.

Geography Enrichment Activities

The Geography department this year is striving to increase enrichment and co-curricular activities through the Geographers' Guild, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, and increasing fieldwork and educational visit opportunities. The Geographers' Guild is open to all students encouraging exploration around the world. We'll be looking at different countries to find out their physical features, human issues and relevant current topics which could include anything from renewable energy, food production, health and maybe even dramatic tectonic events! GCSE students will travel to the Peak District to undertake Rivers fieldwork. They will also look at the regeneration of Derby city centre. At KS3 there is a range of fieldwork opportunities around the school site and around the local community each year, building and developing knowledge to ensure a thorough understanding of how fieldwork is completed.

Further studies and career progression

Studying Geography opens up a wide range of careers. As a degree subject, Geography is highly respected by employers. Geography graduates have one of the highest rates of graduate employment, pursuing a wide range of career paths. It's often said that there is no such thing as a Geography job; rather there are multiple careers that geographers do. There are a broad range of careers open to a Geography graduate. You could seek work in the private or public sector or in a non-governmental organisation or charity, specialising in an area connected to housing, property, land management, the environment or international development. Alternatively, you could train to become a teacher, take a law conversion course, or apply for the Civil Service Fast Stream or NHS graduate scheme.