

## BACKGROUND TO THE REVISION PROCESS

During the Revision of Specifications process, we consulted our stakeholders through:

- Questionnaires;
- Teacher workshops; and
- Subject Advisory Team meetings.

We consulted with a range of stakeholders including:

- Teachers and Heads of Department in post-primary schools;
- Lecturers in Institutes of Further Education;
- Representatives from the world of work;
- Members of Subject Associations;
- Members of Education and Library Boards;
- Inspectorate Personnel from DENI;
- KS3 Pilot Schools Teachers;
- Specialists from our Curriculum Development Teams; and
- Equality Impact Assessment Teams.



## CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT AND REGULATION

### What is controlled assessment?

The concept of controlled assessment has been developed by the regulators to preserve the positive aspects of coursework whilst also addressing the concerns highlighted by teachers.

There are three processes involved in controlled assessment. These are:

- Task setting – ensuring that the tasks are valid and reliable by making them less predictable and formulaic;
- Task taking – addressing issues of authenticity; and
- Task marking – ensuring high quality judgements in assessment.

### What are the regulations?

The following generic regulations apply to all subjects:

- Subjects with a 25% controlled assessment weighting are restricted to one task;
- Those with a 60% weighting may have up to three separate tasks, each with a minimum 20% weighting;
- Awarding bodies must provide guidance on word or time limits; and
- Tasks are reviewed every one or two years in line with the subject regulations.

For a summary of how controlled assessment affects your subject, check out the 'What has Changed and Why?' table overleaf.

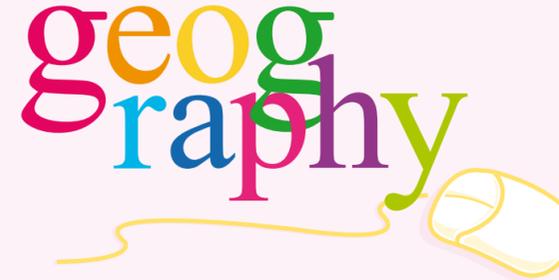
## GETTING STARTED

Whether you already teach our existing GCSE Geography specification, teach a similar specification with another awarding body, or are considering offering this for the first time, getting started with our revised specification really couldn't be easier:

 Visit [www.ccea.org.uk/specifications](http://www.ccea.org.uk/specifications) to view the full revised specification for your subject.

 Attend the next available support event. Go online for our up-to-date events schedule.

Go to [www.ccea.org.uk/specifications](http://www.ccea.org.uk/specifications) to download the full GCSE Geography Specification



## CONTACT US NOW

**Subject Officer**  
Margaret McMullan  
☎ (028) 9026 1404  
✉ [mmcmullan@ccea.org.uk](mailto:mmcmullan@ccea.org.uk)

**Specification Support Officer**  
Arlene Ashfield  
☎ (028) 9026 1200 ext 2291  
✉ [aashfield@ccea.org.uk](mailto:aashfield@ccea.org.uk)

**Entries, Results and Certification Team**  
☎ (028) 9026 1262  
✉ [entriesandresults@ccea.org.uk](mailto:entriesandresults@ccea.org.uk)

**Distribution Team**  
☎ (028) 9026 1242  
✉ [cceadistribution@ccea.org.uk](mailto:cceadistribution@ccea.org.uk)

For queries in relation to:  
Specification content  
Subject-specific issues  
Interpretation of exemplar papers & other materials

For queries in relation to:  
Requesting a meeting  
Requesting further support  
General subject-specific queries

For queries in relation to:  
Entries  
Results

For queries in relation to:  
Requesting materials

 **Whatever your query, we guarantee you a prompt, friendly and efficient service when you contact us**

Check out our online leaflet *Customer Charter – Putting You First* at [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk) to view our service targets and our commitment to you.

"I'm really pleased to introduce this revised GCSE specification. We have designed it to meet the needs of learners in Northern Ireland whilst also providing a qualification that has international currency.

We're proud to be your local awarding body.

Whether you have a query about specifications, examinations, entries or results, it is my priority to ensure that our dedicated subject officers and customer-focused teams listen, respond and provide you with a first-class service."

Anne Marie Duffy – Director of Qualifications, CCEA

## WHAT TEACHERS SAY ABOUT OUR EXAMINATIONS SERVICE....

- 97.5% of teachers are satisfied with the support and helpfulness of our staff.
- 95.5% of teachers are satisfied with the reliability and appropriateness of the materials we dispatch.
- 93% of teachers are satisfied with our administration of examinations.

\* Source: CCEA's 2007 Post-Primary Customer Satisfaction Research



## REVISED GCSE SPECIFICATION SNAPSHOT FOR GEOGRAPHY

For first teaching from September 2009  
First assessment from Summer 2010  
For first award in Summer 2011



## SUMMARY

- Unit 1: *Understanding Our Natural World*
  - Theme A: *The Dynamic Landscape*
  - Theme B: *Our Changing Weather and Climate*
  - Theme C: *The Restless Earth*.
- Unit 2: *Living in Our World*
  - Theme A: *People and Where They Live*
  - Theme B: *Contrasts in World Development*
  - Theme C: *Managing Our Resources*.
- Two external exams: 1 hr 30 mins each, 37.5% weighting each (Total overall weighting for Theme A: 50% and Themes B and C: 25%); each section is made up of multi-part questions; the resource material used in each question may take a variety of forms, such as written text, statistical, and pictorial; students must carry out extended writing in some parts of each question; available Summer only
- Controlled assessment: Fieldwork report; 2000 word project based on primary data collection, 25% weighting, available Summer only

## KEY FEATURES

- Six geographical themes, framed in the style of key ideas and learning outcomes
- Spatial Context Requirement highlighting the scale and general locational context of study
- Controlled assessment outlined in the form of a geographical investigation supported by fieldwork
- Two tiers of entry: Foundation and Higher
- Builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills developed at Key Stage 3 of the Northern Ireland Curriculum and those identified in the National Curriculum for England and Wales
- Helps students progress to the study of geography at a more advanced level, for example courses in GCE AS and A Level Geography or Advanced Vocational Certificate in Education in Leisure and Tourism
- Revised specification is newly unitised and will have its first assessment in Summer 2010

## BENEFITS TO LEARNERS

We have designed this specification to help learners develop:

- Their interest in the subject, being inspired by a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study and gaining an insight into related sectors;
- Confidence in making informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career choices;
- The ability to engage actively in the process of geography and to develop as effective and independent learners and as critical thinkers with enquiring minds;
- Their knowledge and understanding of geographical concepts, appreciating how these concepts affect our changing world;
- A framework of spatial awareness to use to appreciate the importance of the location of places and environments, from local to global;
- An appreciation of the differences and similarities between people's views of the world, its environments, societies and cultures;
- An understanding of the significance of values and attitudes to the development and resolution of issues;
- An awareness of their responsibilities as global citizens and recognition of how they can contribute to a future that is sustainable and inclusive;
- The ability to apply their learning to the real world through fieldwork and other learning outside the classroom; and
- The ability to use geographical skills, appropriate technologies, enquiry and analysis.

CONTENT		WHAT HAS CHANGED?	WHY HAS IT CHANGED?
CURRENT	NEW		
<b>Unit 1</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Theme A: Atmosphere and Human Impact</li> <li>Theme B: Physical Processes and Challenges</li> <li>Theme C: Ecosystems and Sustainability</li> </ul>	<b>Unit 1: Understanding Our Natural World</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Dynamic Earth</li> <li>Our Changing Weather &amp; Climate</li> <li>The Restless Earth</li> </ul>	<p>The content has been reduced and streamlined.</p> <p>The content has been revised and updated to reflect contemporary issues.</p>	<p>Consultation with teachers showed that they believe the current specification is content heavy.</p> <p>To make this course more up to date and relevant to young people in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.</p>
<b>Unit 2</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Theme D: Population and Resources</li> <li>Theme E: Economic Change and Development</li> <li>Theme F: Settlements and Change</li> </ul>	<b>Unit 2: Living in Our World</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People and Where They Live</li> <li>Contrasts in World Development</li> <li>Managing Our Resources</li> </ul>	<p>In Unit 2 there are opportunities to develop the use of new technologies, including GIS.</p>	<p>To give students opportunities to use new technologies, including GIS, to assist geographical investigation and to give them experience with new, cutting edge developments in geography.</p>
ASSESSMENT		WHAT HAS CHANGED?	WHY HAS IT CHANGED?
CURRENT	NEW		
Linear (Assessment at the end of two years study)	Unitised (Assessment at the end of each year of the two years of study)	<p>The specification is now broken down into manageable units that can be assessed at the end of each of the two years study.</p>	<p>To provide greater opportunity for rewarding learning.</p>
<b>Internal assessment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fieldwork Investigation</li> <li>Internally assessed</li> <li>Externally moderated</li> <li>Maximum 2500 words</li> <li>Weighting: 20%</li> </ul>	<b>Controlled assessment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fieldwork Report</li> <li>Report of a fieldwork investigation based on primary data collection</li> <li>Maximum 2000 words</li> <li>Weighting: 25%</li> </ul>	<p>The word length has been reduced.</p> <p>The assessment weighting has increased.</p> <p>The specification includes a list of fieldwork tasks from which centres must choose one.</p>	<p>To fulfil criteria requirements relating to controlled assessment.</p>

Go to [www.ccea.org.uk/specifications](http://www.ccea.org.uk/specifications) to download the full GCSE Geography Specification

## COUNT ON US FOR SUPPORT...

### Local Support IN PERSON

- We are your local awarding body, so we can provide personalised support and visits to you and your centre upon request. Contact the Specification Support Officer named overleaf if you would like to arrange for us to visit you or your department.
- If you have a query or require advice/guidance, please contact the relevant person listed overleaf.

### Local Support AT TEACHER-FOCUSED EVENTS

We provide a comprehensive programme of events to support this specification which includes:

- FREE launch events to introduce you to the revised specification; and
- FREE seminars to support its teaching and assessment and to assist you with subject-specific issues.

We will mail invitations to Heads of Department at least three weeks in advance of each event. Alternatively, check out our full list of support events online at [www.ccea.org.uk/spec-changes](http://www.ccea.org.uk/spec-changes)

### Support ONLINE

Most of the support we provide will be available on your subject microsite. The site will contain:

- The latest version of the GCSE Geography specification;
- A Scheme of Work;
- Chief Examiner's Reports with top tips for improving examination performance;
- Student Guides;
- Specimen Papers and Mark Schemes; and
- Exemplification of Standards (available after the first examination series).

Visit your subject microsite by logging on to [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk) and selecting it from the dropdown menu.

### Support IN PRINT

Some of the materials listed above are also available in print. To find out which materials and publications are currently available for your subject:

- Contact our Distribution Team on (028) 9026 1242; or
- Go to [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk) to view our Examination and Assessment Sales Catalogue.



Contact us if you don't find what you are looking for