

GCSE



WJEC GCSE GEOGRAPHY

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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Q: Will there be sample assessments for teachers to see how the exams will be structured, and questions will be phrased?

A: Yes, the assessment pack with the sample assessment materials was published on 19th December 2024. ([GCSE Geography | Made for Wales](#)). These sample assessments reflect the structure and question phrasing that will be used in all exams for this qualification.

Q: Can the qualification be taught over three years or must it be taught over two years only?

A: Although it is designed as a two-year qualification where candidates will start in September of year 10 and complete all units by the end of year 11, centres may choose to deliver the qualification as appropriate to their curriculum plan.

Q: Is there an order in which the units should be taught?

A: There is no prescribed teaching order and centres are free to plan the course to suit their own setting. However, we do recommend that teaching Unit 4, Section 4.1 (The concept of sustainability), at the beginning of the course will help to develop the candidates' understanding of sustainability. It will also help them in making decisions and applying the concept of sustainability to the content in Units 1 and 3. Also Unit 4 requires a maturity and depth of knowledge in terms of critical analysis and evaluation, and this would suggest year 11 candidates may be better equipped to attempt this assessment at the very end of the course. Unit 2 fieldwork can be done at any time, but experience suggests that the spring and summer of Year 10 may be the best time to do this. The submission for Unit 2 will be in the early spring term every year, so this must also be considered.

Q: When will resources such as textbooks and online blended learning be published.

A: There are no plans to produce an endorsed textbook for this specification. Instead, we have produced Blended Learning Resources which are available now in Welsh and English. The Blended Learning resources are editable so that centres can tailor them to their individual settings. For each topic area there are also knowledge organisers, however these are not editable. ([Geography - Educational Resources - WJEC](#))

NEA Questions

Q: Should the NEAs be conducted under high controlled conditions?

A: The Assessment Packs set out the necessary controls for each NEA, however most of the NEA tasks will be completed under high control conditions ([GCSE Geography | Made for Wales](#)).

Q: Will teachers be trained on how to mark Unit 4, the internally assessed NEA?

A: Unit 4 NEA will be available from 2027. This is set by WJEC, marked by the centre and then moderated by the WJEC. The Professional Learning planned for 2025-2026 will prepare teachers to assess the Unit 4 NEA.

Q: Why are there two topics listed each year for the fieldwork?

A: Centres choose one topic from a choice of two. You may use your own knowledge and expertise within departments to choose which topic and location works best for your learners and there is no requirement for different environments for the site.

Q: Do centres still have to do two fieldwork days?

A: Fieldwork is the foundation of good geographical enquiry so we would encourage you to plan valuable field work experiences. Primary data must be collected off the school site in a suitable environment for a successful NEA. One day in the field will suffice, but you are, of course, encouraged to do more than one day of fieldwork if possible. This could be to support the development of fieldwork skills, as outlined in Unit 2, or to support delivery of learning throughout the course.

Q: Is a fieldwork statement still required?

A: A fieldwork statement is still required, outlining the aims of your investigation and how it fits the topics set. This must still be signed by you as Head of Department and your Head of Centre.

Q: How do centres approach developing fieldwork skills, through knowledge and understanding of the six-part enquiry model?

A: Unit 2 skills must be developed through content delivery and classroom teaching time leading the candidates progressively towards assessment in the NEA. This teaching time should involve pilot studies where enquiry questions are developed and justified, primary data is collected, and/or relevant secondary data e.g. from previous fieldwork is used. Opportunities should be identified to practice and justify appropriate methods of data presentation and analysis, followed by drawing conclusions and writing an effective evaluation of the geographical enquiry.

Q: Do learners need to create a portfolio that can be used to answer questions set by the WJEC (like they currently do)?

A: No, the task is significantly different. There is no requirement to create a portfolio, and there is no requirement to use a blank booklet for candidate answers. All requirements are outlined in the Unit 2 Assessment Pack and Sample Assessment Materials, to be found on the Portal under NEA resources.

Q: Does digital submission mean the candidates need to complete work digitally?

A: No, candidates don't have to complete all work digitally. Hand drawn graphs and maps, for example, can be scanned in. The final submission will need to be submitted as a digital document e.g., a pdf.

Q: Is the Unit 4 NEA similar to the DME/problem solving paper from the previous WJEC B specifications?

A: It is a similar type of assessment but has specific tasks to be completed in response to pre-release material where the candidate must use their own research, and knowledge and understanding. Pre-release is a new feature of the GCSE specification.

Q: Is Unit 4 a cross-topic unit that encompasses something we would have already taught?

A: Unit 4 will focus on geographical concepts, futures and issues that must be drawn from the content outlined in the specification. The contexts can be global and UK-wide as well as from Wales.

Q: Will NEA submission deadlines be staggered to reduce workload/pressure for learners and examiners?

A: Yes, this is being considered ahead of the publication of submission dates for each NEA.