

A Level (includes AS) Geography (9696)

Can I teach the AS/A level course in one year?

AS Geography is designed to provide the foundation for further study to the full A level. Therefore it is expected that the AS level part of the syllabus will be taught in the first year of an A level course, even if candidates are not examined for the AS level at the end of the first year. The advanced options should then be covered in the second year. In some circumstances it may be possible to cover the whole syllabus in one year, but this is unlikely to be possible if the student is trying to do three A levels within one year.

How many hours contact time do you recommend for AS /A level?

Over the two years of an A level course 4.5 to 5 hours per week of teaching time is adequate. Obviously students will need to do individual work outside of this time.

What support materials are available?

Syllabus; Specimen Question Papers and Mark Schemes;

AS Standards Booklet; this contains student answers to AS questions along with the marks and comments of a senior A level examiner);

A level Standards Booklet is now available;

AS Question Papers and Mark Schemes are available from the June 2001 examinations onwards.

A level Question Papers and Mark Schemes are available from the June 2002 examinations onwards on the Teacher Support Site. All the above are available from CIE Publications.

What INSET is available for A and AS geography?

Details of CIE INSET can be found on our website (<http://www.cie.org.uk/learning/training/index.html>).

Any requests for INSET should be sent to the Training and Conference Unit at CIE.

Do I have to cover all of the syllabus at AS level?

It is necessary to cover all the AS syllabus, even though there is now a choice of 5 questions from 6 in Section A. If one of the six topics (three physical geography and three human geography) is not covered there is a real chance that some candidates will find it difficult to find five questions they can answer. By not covering all six topics choice in Section B or Section C is also reduced. The course is designed such that all topics should be taught.

What is the six factor day model? The syllabus itemises the components of the six factor day model – *incoming solar radiation, reflected solar radiation, energy absorbed into the surface and subsurface, sensible heat transfer, latent heat transfer/evaporation, long wave earth radiation.*

Basically it is informing you of the factors that need to be covered in looking at the energy budget for incoming radiation. You need to cover each of these six 'subtopics' and their interrelationships. Collins Educational Atmospheric Processes and Human Influences; text covers these items pretty well, for example from p30 onwards, apart from the role of latent heat in the system. The diagram on p31 is a useful starting point, though it ignores sensible heat transfer, ie by winds and ocean currents. To cover these heat transfers you need to look at the diagram p32 as a starting point, though I have seen simpler examples. This is the starting point for 2.2 The Earth- atmosphere energy budget.

All the six factor model is stating is what you need to cover in looking at the energy budget, i.e meanings, definitions, explanations and how these may vary during the day. They provide the basics for understanding the processes operating within the atmosphere at a variety of scales, from global circulation down to localised convection

The four factor night model simply requires you to cover the processes acting at night as insolation ceases. ie radiation to space, cooling of the ground, frost, dew, etc. Again this is an introduction leading into Weather processes and phenomena.

You may find Weather and Climate in Africa; Longman; Buckle C; ISBN 0 582 09333 3 useful. It doesn't refer as such to the named models, but covers all the necessary aspects thoroughly.

I can only afford one textbook for each student. What should I buy?

A new text book is in production to match the syllabus. It has been written by Garrett Nagle and Paul Guinness and will be published by Hodder Educational around May 2011. This will be a CIE endorsed text.

In the short term it is always difficult to recommend one book. A good basic text that covers the AS and most of the A level is Environment and People, M Witherick (Ed), pub Stanley Thornes, ISBN 0748721207. I would also recommend Guinness P and Nagle G; Advanced Geography: Concepts and Cases (1999) Hodder & Stoughton Educational; ISBN: 0340725087. However, there are other texts being published for UK AS and A levels that may be even better. Details will be posted on the CIE website when such books have been reviewed. A

Papers 2 and 3 seem to be timetabled together?

Papers 2 and 3 are timetabled in the same session but they are in separate papers and there is a short break allowed between them

What skills will be needed by candidates, particularly in Section A of Paper 1?

In Section A of Paper 1 all the questions will have some sort of resource. Questions in other parts of that paper and in Papers 2 & 3 for the A level may also have resources. CIE will try to use resources that have been published and adapt them as necessary. Any resource that is used will be of a suitable standard for the examination and will be understandable provided that the candidates have had exposure to a variety of resources in preparation for the exam. The range and style of resources used will be similar to those in A and AS textbooks, but possibly simplified for the purposes of the examination. Candidates should be able to interpret tables, graphs, written sources, diagrams, sketches, photographs and maps. Maps at a variety of scales may be used, from those showing world distributions to detailed plans of a settlement or a river channel.

Survey maps may be set in Section A of Paper 1 from time to time, but certainly not every session or every year. Candidates would be expected to interpret the map in relation to certain topics in the AS syllabus units. This could involve identifying human and physical features and patterns on the map, drawing simple sketch maps or responding to, but not drawing, cross sections. Tasks such as calculating bearings or gradients will not be set.

Is there a way for teachers from schools around the world to share ideas and information on A level Geography?

There is a Geography discussion forum on CIE's Teacher Support website which covers both the IGCSE and A /AS level syllabuses.