



Archbishop Tenison's

CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL

SIXTH FORM



Why study A Level Geography

- *Geography is a relevant, dynamic and academically rigorous subject that helps you to make sense of the world around you.*
- At A level a variety of topics are studied across both human and physical geography that help you to engage critically with some of the most pressing challenges facing the world today.
- As well as the exciting topic content, you will also develop your qualitative and quantitative geographical skills at A level; working with images, factual text and discursive/creative material, digital data, numerical and spatial data and innovative forms of data, including crowd-sourced and 'big data'.
- At A level, fieldwork provides an exciting opportunity to study processes, systems and interconnections in both human and physical geography. You will develop skills to select research questions, apply relevant techniques and skills, and find appropriate ways to analyse and communicate your findings. As well as developing these desirable skills for employment, fieldwork experiences at A level can also open up opportunities to travel further afield to fascinating destinations.



A Geography A Level can really help you get onto the degree course you want!

At A Level, Geography combines well with both arts and science subjects. Geography is highly valued by universities as an A Level choice. The [Russell Group report \(PDF\)](#) published in 2011 names geography as one of the eight facilitating subjects. This is a subject most likely to be required or preferred for entry to degree courses and choosing facilitating subjects will keep more options open to you at university. In 2015 [The Guardian identified geography as the 'must-have A Level'](#).

Your A Level geography course will cover both the physical and human environments and the complex interaction of processes that shape our world. It will also, importantly, show the applied side of the subject - how human intervention affects the environment and how people adapt and mitigate the effects of processes on their environment. This is complex and dynamic and varies from place to place depending on people's resources, technology and culture. There is plenty of room for discussion and extended research, which will help you become an independent thinker and learner. By the time you get to your exams, you will be able to show your understanding of a range of opinions and be able to illustrate your answers with case studies from local, national and international examples.

You will learn in a wide variety of ways, using maps, GIS skills, data analysis, photos, videos, and podcasts, as well as attending lectures and study days. You will be encouraged to frame your own questions using higher level thinking skills and show your grasp of complex issues through report and essay writing. Fieldwork will be an essential part of your A Level course. You may even get to go on a residential trip to experience a very different environment to the one where you live. For example, you may visit an area famous for its coastal, river or glaciated scenery as well as carrying out enquiries relating to issues in your local environment.

Of course many A Level students do not yet have a clear idea of what kind of career they might want to pursue. If you are in this position, remember that geography as an A level gives you the chance to keep your options open, as it covers both arts and science components. It is quite likely that when you choose geography your classmates will all be doing different



A Level Geography Modules

(underlined are topics currently studied at ABT but are subject to change)

Component 1: Physical Geography

- Section A: Water and carbon cycles
- Section B: either Hot desert environments and their margins or Coastal systems and landscapes
- Section C: either Hazards or Ecosystems under stress or Cold environments

• Assessment
2 hour 30 minutes written exam
40% of A Level

Component 2: Human Geography

- Section A: Global systems and global governance
- Section B: Changing places
- Section C: either Contemporary urban environments or Population and the environment or Resource security

• Assessment
2 hour 30 minutes written exam
40% of A Level

Component 3: Geographical Investigation

Students complete an individual investigation which must include data collected in the field. The individual investigation must be based on a question developed by the student relating to any part of the specification content.

• Assessment
Coursework report (3000 – 4000 words)
20% of A-level
Marked by teachers
Moderated by AQA



Our A Level Geography Fieldwork....

- The A Level requirement is for 4 days of fieldwork. We run a joint trip with another local school, to Dorset, where we receive first class tuition from our local fieldwork expert. This prepares our students brilliantly for the independent research project which they begin when we return from the fieldwork trip.
- Our students tend to do their projects on the Carbon Cycle, coastal management, regeneration of a local urban area, urban land use amongst others.
- Fieldwork is a really important part of geography. Whether you go locally or get a chance to travel further away it will be an excellent opportunity to experience some of the things you have learnt about in class, see things differently and of course have some fun.
- This is also a skill that universities love to see on your UCAS applications and something which you can put in the skills section of your CV.



What's great about subject at Tenison's Sixth Form?

- At Tenison's, we are a welcoming and friendly department. We have 2 dedicated Geography teachers – Mrs Croker and Mrs Mullins in 2 fabulous newly refurbished classrooms.
- We have a track record of really good grades
- We have 4 of our A Level Geographers applying to study Geography at university this year.
- We have a great partnership with another local school, through which we share trips, resources and expertise.

Our recent geography trips

Brighton

Iceland

Norfolk



Birling Gap



Somerset



Barcelona



Croydon



Isle of Wight



What career paths can Geography lead you to?



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Christopher Jackson - Professor of Basin Analysis at Imperial College London, UK.

[Watch Christopher talking about his role here:](https://www.rgs.org/geography/choose-geography/i-am-a-geographer/christopher-jackson/)

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How did you get to where you are now?

I grew up in a working-class family in Derby to Caribbean immigrant parents, attending a local state school before studying Geology (BSc) and attaining a PhD at the University of Manchester. Having completed my PhD, I worked in the energy industry in Norway, before returning to the UK to take an academic position at Imperial College.

What do you do as part of your role?

My day-to-day role involves undertaking research in how the Earth's crust deforms, and how sediment is transported across and preserved within ancient landscapes. I also teach students, at undergraduate and postgraduate level.

Why did you choose earth science? Why should others choose earth science?

I chose earth science because I enjoyed it at GCSE and A Level! It allowed me to look at big questions related to the evolution of our planet and gave me the opportunity to spend time outdoors. Everyone is attracted to earth science for different reasons, but I recommend it because it allows you to undertake



Prem Gill - Polar Conservationist working with The Scott Polar Research Institute, the WWF and the British Antarctic Survey.

[Read more about Prem here:
file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/Prem-Gill-Polar-Conservationist.pdf](file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/Prem-Gill-Polar-Conservationist.pdf)

How did you get to where you are now?

How did you get to where you are now? I grew up in Reading and have had a diverse career in Remote Sensing. I studied **Marine Geography** at Cardiff University and worked at Royal Boskalis Westminster N.V. as a hydrographic surveyor before embarking on my current career as a Polar Scientist.

What you might do in a typical week?

I work for the University of Cambridge, the Scott Polar Research Institute, the British Antarctic Survey and the WWF. The two seals I focus on in my work are the crabeater seal and Weddell seal. These seals rely on sea ice for breeding - they are the most numerous species and are slightly easier to identify from space. We believe these two species inhabit different areas which I want to investigate and quantify. My work consists of taking satellite pictures of the polar regions from space and analysing them to count seal populations and map habitats. I am interested in seal numbers, reproduction, where they breed and if any of this is changing due to climate change. I choose study sites which are showing signs of rapid climate change or by identifying unique habitats which are special and slightly different. Most of my focus is on the Antarctica Peninsula, the most rapidly warming region in Antarctica.



September 2020



Prem Gill - Polar Conservationist working with The Scott Polar Research Institute, the WWF and the British Antarctic Survey.

Follow Prem on Twitter:
https://twitter.com/PolarPrem?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor

Do you get to travel for your role?

In 2019 I travelled to Antarctica to measure light reflection from seals! The project's aim was to calculate the spectral signature of crabeater and Weddell seals. It was the first field project that I led, and it was a huge success, with four out of the seven Antarctic seal species surveyed. Once lockdown eases, this data will allow me to return to the laboratory and distinguish between seals and rocks with more confidence when studying aerial satellite imagery.

How does geography feature in your work?

Remote sensing is a huge part of geography. Some form of GIS now features in most undergraduate courses and it is a growing area of employment for postgraduates, with companies such as ESRI or Ordnance Survey. Ultimately my work touches on a number of themes in geography both physical and human. For example, it looks to better understand how the presence of polar wildlife relates to the environment across time and space, how the results of this work influences conservation management and policy within Antarctica, and how we can provide accessible research tools to enable everyone to map wildlife in the remote polar regions and thus become geographers in their own right.



September 2020



Katie Boon

Job title: Technical Advisor for
Flood and Coastal Risk Asset
Management

Organisation: Environment Agency

Location: Tonbridge, Kent, UK
(time spent in the London,
Addington and Northfleet offices)



How did you get to where you are now?

I chose to study Physical Geography at Durham University. I never intended to get a job in a sector relating to geography, however, throughout my degree I became more open and excited to the idea of seeing where geography could take me in the work place.

After university I applied to the Environment Agency, not really knowing what it involved but felt I had nothing to lose. A year and a half later, I had embraced the work and training available and was successful in gaining a promotion and the opportunity to undertake a part time Master's in Flood and Coastal Engineering over two years. I have just completed my first year and hope to have successfully achieved the degree by next September. This will assist me in obtaining another qualification with the Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management (CIWEM).

What do you do as part of your role?

The North Kent Asset Performance Team focuses on main river watercourses within the North Kent catchment area. My responsibilities are very varied and include: identifying and bidding for future works; project management; maintaining close relationships with all internal teams, consulting prior to works and taking action to enhance knowledge on all environmental aspects that require attention; responding to Flood Risk Activity Permits (FRAP); using ArcGIS software to visually present projects; and proactively engaging with significant stakeholders.

Alongside this I am also a Category 1 Responder as a Flood Incident Duty Officer which involves providing 24/7 flood support every six weeks, utilising software to monitor rain and tide levels to aid quick and effective decision making.



Chipo Meke is a Management Consultant for KMPG in London.

[Read more about Chipo here:](file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/Chipo-Meke-Management-Consultant,-KMPG.pdf)
<file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/Chipo-Meke-Management-Consultant,-KMPG.pdf>

How did you get to where you are now?

I have a BSc (Hons) Geography with Business Management degree from Queen Mary University of London. When I was picking the course I wanted to study, I didn't have a career in mind but I felt that geography would help to give me a broad range of skills and knowledge for a number of potential careers. Many graduate programmes are now more focused on the skills and experience you have as opposed to your actual degree which meant that my focus was on picking a course in a subject I really enjoyed.

Why did you choose geography? Why should others choose geography?

I chose geography because it was a subject I really enjoyed at school and it is a subject that is intertwined into many aspects of life and the world. I knew it would enable me to learn many skills and experiences that would be transferrable when applying for roles. I was unsure about my career and I wanted a degree that would enable me to apply for any type of role I was interested in.

You should pick geography as it has many opportunities for learning technical skills, developing report writing and public speaking skills. Some courses, mine included, offer field trips abroad which are a great way of learning about another country or city and the various issues these areas face (social, economic etc.). This enables geography students to translate such experiences into work and life scenarios as you have a greater understanding of how impacts can change circumstances within organisations or people.





Farhasaad Shahid is a Communications Associate at the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the UN Refugee Agency, and is based in Stockholm, Sweden.

How did you get to where you are now?

After studying Physics and Chemistry at higher level in the International Baccalaureate program in Helsinki, I decided sciences were not exactly my thing. Fortunately, I landed onto studying Human Geography through Queen Mary's clearing service. I packed my bags for the UK and what followed were the three best years of my life, after which I was inspired enough to complete postgraduate studies at the London School of Economics in MSc International Migration and Public Policy. Upon graduation, I was fortunate enough to land an internship with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the UN Refugee Agency, at the Regional Representation for Northern Europe. After my internship, I got a call informing me that they wanted to hire me – and here I am!

Was there anything particularly useful that helped you get into this role?

My geography studies were the basis of my career. Because of my inspiring lecturers, I was able to tackle the topics that were of interest to me while getting clear guidance and support from them throughout. I had freedom to choose my dissertation topic which I did on the 2015 'refugee crisis' in Europe, and Finland in particular, which

What do you do as part of your role?

Our office is the Regional Representation for Northern Europe and it covers eight countries (Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden). As the main person working with digital engagement, I am responsible for managing our eight country websites and social media platforms, as well as analysing the data from them to understand how we can perform even better and get more engagement from our audiences.





Maria Christodoulou is an EU Exit Policy Advisor for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), based in London, UK.



What do you do as part of your role?

I am a Policy Adviser in Defra's EU exit chemicals, pesticides and hazardous waste team (focusing specifically on EU-exit chemicals). My team is responsible for delivering a new policy and framework for chemical management and use in the UK post-Brexit.

My role within the team has varied, I have been responsible for producing a full business case for UK chemicals to seek funding approval from the Treasury, and I also deal with issues relating to chemicals governance and working with the devolved administrations (Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland). My day-to-day responsibilities vary, I could be in back-to-back meetings with representatives from the Scottish/Welsh/Northern Irish governments, or at my desk working on policy papers. Either way, no two days are the same, which makes it super interesting!

How does geography feature in your work/what difference does it make?

The main goal of my team is to manage exposure of chemicals to protect the environment, so an understanding of environmental matters is important. On a wider scale, understanding the geopolitical climate is also key when negotiating chemical matters internationally. My team deals with numerous international conventions, such as the Stockholm and Minamata convention, as well as the Climate Conference of Parties: all things I remember learning about in school/university, so it is really cool to now be working on these!

What is the most interesting project you have worked on?

The most interesting project I've worked on is a worldwide review of chemical regulatory regimes. As project manager for this, I was in charge of engaging internationally with representatives in Australia, Turkey, South Korea, Japan and the USA to produce a report comparing these five chemical regimes to the current EU regime. The opportunity to engage with officials in these countries and understand how their regimes operate was really interesting.

September 2020



Chris Mason

Job title: BBC Political
Correspondent and Presenter, Any
Questions, BBC Radio 4 at BBC
News

Organisation: BBC

Location: London, UK



How did you get to where you are now?

I always wanted to be a reporter. Call me narrow minded, call me single minded...I never wanted to do anything else. There are no other journalists in the family, but I loved my little white battery powered radio I got when I was six. I loved watching Trevor McDonald's News at Ten in the 1990s and I loved newspapers. But I also grew up in an environment where I was surrounded by the beauty of the Yorkshire Dales and also had two parents who were primary school teachers – and both of them were geography coordinators! So whenever we were out and about in the Yorkshire Dales, no Sunday afternoon ramble would be complete without explanations from the age of four onwards about how this was a glacial valley or that was a meander in a river or that was a sedimentary rock or that was a linear village. In other words, the geographical education started remarkably young!

How does geography feature in your work/What difference does it make?

Geography, the big, hulking, amorphous discipline that it is — saw me through my three years at university. If I am brutally honest, I studied it because it was the last subject standing when I left school — everything else had fallen by the wayside, either because I wasn't interested in it or I was hopeless at it. Geography survived. I found it frustrating at university, because of its scale and lack of definition: I remember in the department there was a bloke who was fascinated in medieval villages whose office was immediately next to a guy who spent his life looking into volcanoes. And yet they

were both geographers. There is a physical geography which my maths wasn't up to but still struggled with it. Once I was able to grasp it, there is a social geography which my maths wasn't up to understanding, I got slowly better, and absolutely loved the contemporary history elements of my final years — studying the post Soviet states, the restructuring of Britain since the 1970s, the HIV/AIDS pandemic. And some of the books I read back then — this is 1998-2001 — did become bigger talking points later. Francis Fukuyama's *The End of History*, for instance which I read in the late 90s...and then 9/11 happened.



I am a Geographer

To see what other people have done with their Geography education, click on the link below:

<https://www.rgs.org/iamageographer/>



Read about a degree in Geography

- <https://www.rgs.org/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?nodeguid=ac837119-e98a-405a-bddf-9919f5838dbc&lang=en-GB>