

CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL AS & A LEVEL

Geography 9696

Assessment Overview

Examinations 2027, 2028 and 2029

How the qualification is assessed

The table shows the papers and components described for this syllabus. AS candidates take the designated AS components; the full A Level includes the additional components shown. A component's raw mark is the total available on that assessment; its weighting is the share of the qualification result, which may differ from its share of raw marks.

Paper or component	Duration	Raw marks	Weighting	Question or task structure
1: Physical Geography	1 h 30 min	60	AS 50%; A 25%	Resource questions on three topics; one of three essays
2: Human Geography	1 h 30 min	60	AS 50%; A 25%	Resource questions on three topics; one of three essays
3: Global Environments	1 h 30 min	60	A 25%	Two selected options; structured question and essay for each
4: Global Themes	1 h 30 min	60	A 25%	Two selected options; structured question and essay for each

Read the weighting against your qualification route. A longer paper or a larger raw-mark total does not automatically mean a greater final weighting. Prepare for every component that applies to you, including practical, oral or coursework requirements where specified.

What each component requires

AS Level candidates take Papers 1 and 2.

Paper 1, Physical Geography, lasts ninety minutes and is worth sixty marks. In Section A, you answer one resource-based question on each of the three physical topics, worth forty-five marks altogether. In Section B, you choose one fifteen-mark essay from three questions. The paper contributes fifty per cent of the AS Level and twenty-five per cent of the full A Level.

Paper 2, Human Geography, has the same duration, marks, structure and weighting, using the three human-geography topics.

For the complete A Level, candidates also take Papers 3 and 4.

Paper 3, Global Environments, lasts ninety minutes and is worth sixty marks. You answer on the two options you have studied. For each option, you complete one compulsory ten-mark structured question and choose one twenty-mark essay from two alternatives.

Paper 4, Global Themes, follows the same structure for your two selected global themes. Papers 3 and 4 each contribute twenty-five per cent of the full A Level.

AS Level may be completed as a standalone qualification. Alternatively, you can follow the staged route by taking Papers 1 and 2 first and carrying those results forward within Cambridge's permitted time limit, before completing Papers 3 and 4. You may also take all four papers in one examination series.

AS Level is graded from lower-case a to e, while the full A Level is graded from A star to E.

Preparing the right kind of response

Interpret the actual map, photograph, graph or data provided. Use accurate place evidence to support explanations, and distinguish causes, effects and responses. In fieldwork questions, connect the method and sampling decisions with the question being investigated and the reliability of the conclusion.

The assessment objectives are visible in the response itself: relevant knowledge, appropriate use of the stimulus or task, a clear method or explanation, and a conclusion where requested. The command word and mark allocation help show the depth required. An answer should respond to the actual question, not reproduce a memorised passage that only partly fits.

Timing and examination arrangements

Begin preparation with accurate, untimed work, then move towards the duration and conditions of your required component. Use mark allocations to guide pacing while allowing time to read instructions and check the response. Any practice pacing advice is study guidance, not a new Cambridge time rule.

Examinations are available in June and November, and private candidates may enter.

An approved examination centre confirms entries, available component options, deadlines and any practical or speaking arrangements. Preparation-course access does not itself constitute an examination entry. At A Level, select two Paper 3 global-environment options and two Paper 4 global-theme options. The full list describes the choices available; it does not make every option compulsory.

Key pointers: Know your required components, follow question choices precisely and practise the relevant response formats. **Next:** Open **Learning Resources** to see which materials support this preparation.