



Geography, Geology and Environmental Science at University

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The plan

- My university experience
- Why might you study Geography or a related discipline?
- What courses are there?
- Things to consider when choosing a course
- Other options
- Your preparation
- Questions

My university experience

2011 A Levels

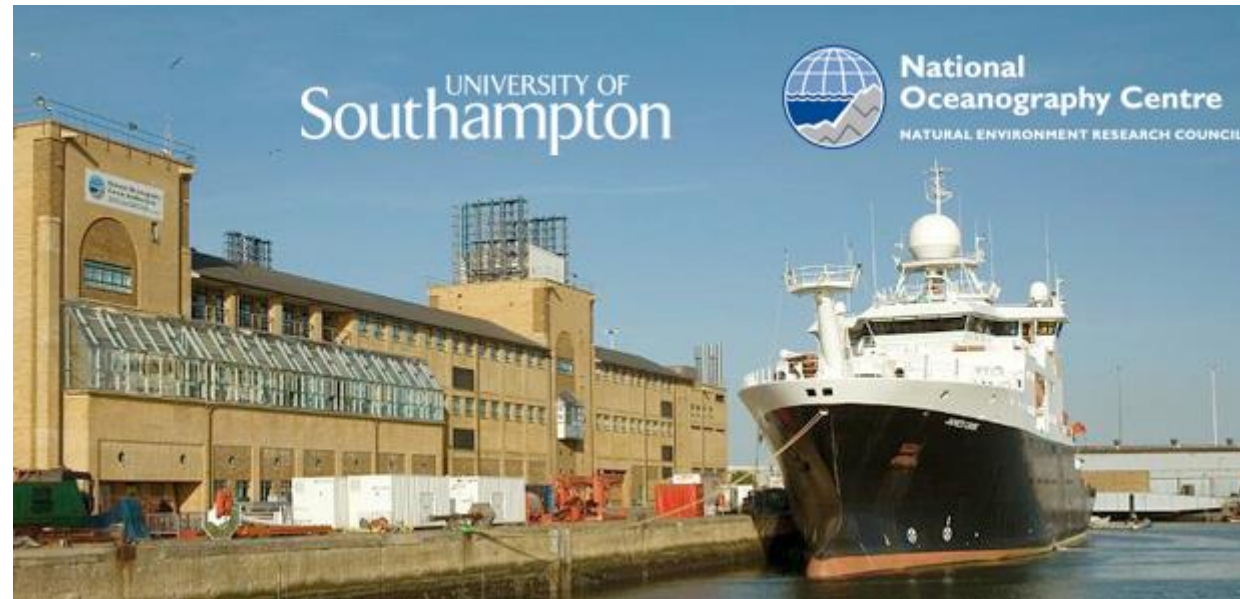
Geography (A)
Geology (A)
Biology (A)
Chemistry (C)
EPQ (A*)

2011-2014

University of Southampton

BSc Oceanography (First Class Honours)

- Took modules in Ocean and Earth Science and Geography
- Went on to specialise in Ocean Biogeochemistry



2014-2017

Durham University University College

PGCE in Secondary Geography
MA Education (Merit)



Durham
University



2019-2021

University College London - Institute of Education

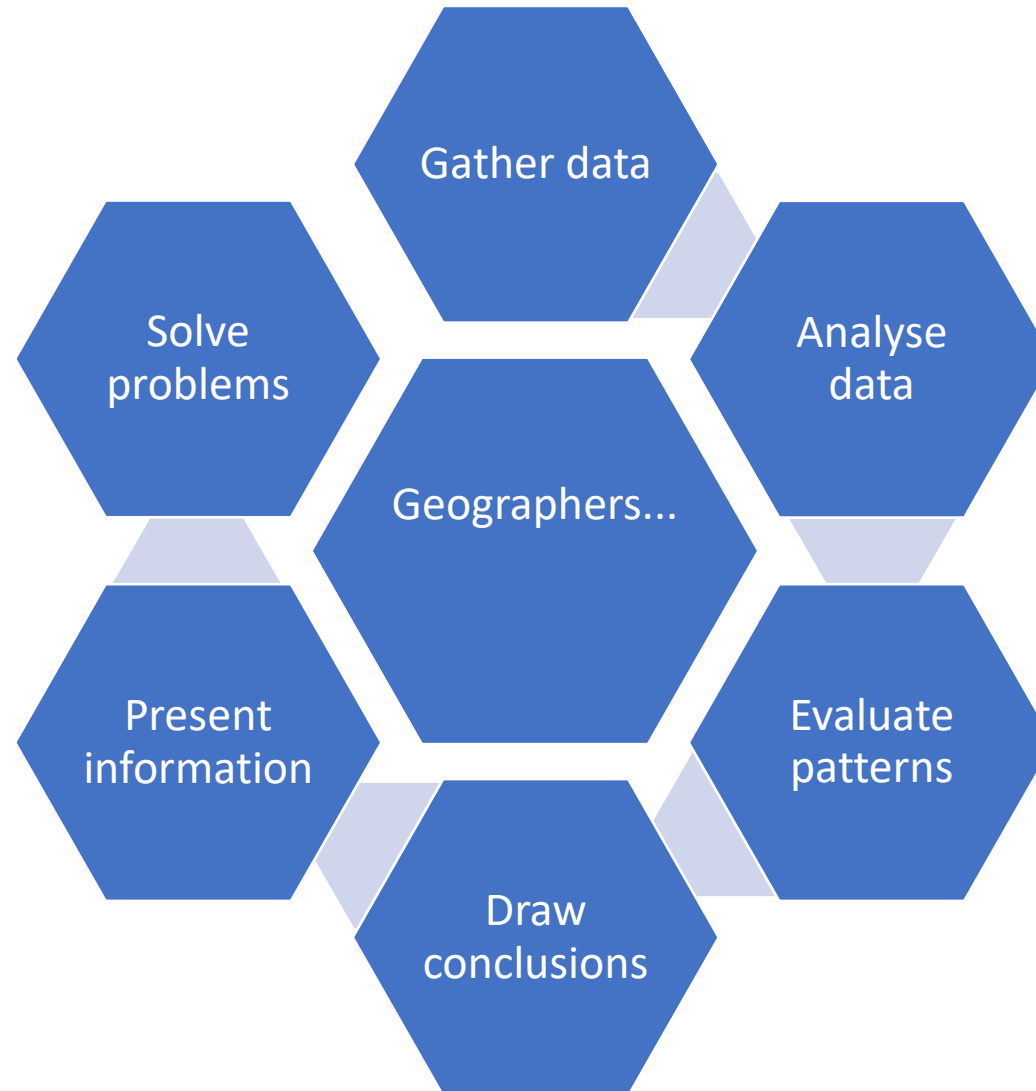
MBA Educational Leadership International (Distinction)



Institute of Education



Why study Geography or a related discipline?



Geography at University

Geography at most universities is split into BA and BSc courses. Typically, these courses share a common first year and then split into separate disciplines from the second year onwards. It is not uncommon for people to change between the two courses after arrival at university.

Some universities offer straight BA Human and BSc Physical courses – focusing exclusively on one side of the subject from day one.

BA Geography

- BA = Bachelor of Arts
- Based in Human Geography
- Study of populations, societies and their interactions with landscapes
- Tend to be no subject specific entry requirements – perhaps you might study other humanities subjects, Maths is also helpful – but by no means essential
- Tend to involve statistical analysis of large data sets using software packages.

BSc Geography

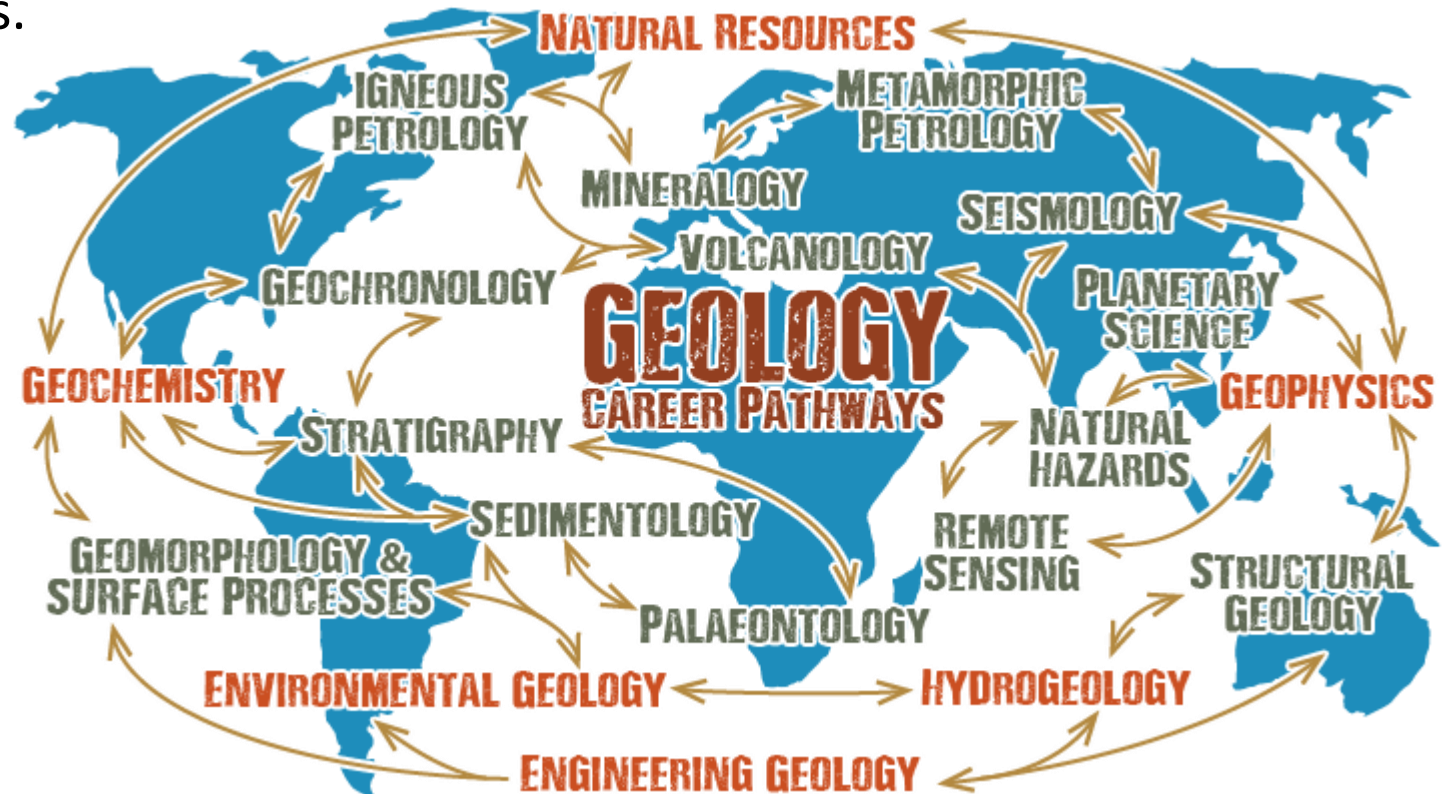
- BSc = Bachelor of Science
- Based in Physical Geography
- Study of physical processes and landforms, as well as assessing the impact of human activity on environments and sustainability challenges.
- Tend to be no subject specific requirements, though you may already study a science subject at A Level or ESS, Biology or Chemistry at IB SL/HL – check entry requirements.
- Tend to involve more lab work and Geographical Information Systems

Geology

- A science discipline – some universities will ask for two science subjects (Geography counts) + Biology/Chemistry/Physics/Maths/ESS (IB Only).
- Will involve lab work and practical workshops as well as lectures. If value for money is a factor – you often get much more teaching time on these sorts of courses.
- Very strong career prospects – Geology grads in industry among the highest paid – up there with Computer Science/Economics.

- Leads into careers in:

- Mining
- Nuclear and renewable energy
- Water resource management
- Space agencies
- Petrochemicals
- Engineering
- Natural Hazard
- Climate science



Environmental Science

Geography →

Law →

Biology →

Politics →

Medical Science →

Vocational →

Code	Module	Credits
GEO2440	Geographical Information Science and Systems	15
GEO2441	Remote Sensing for Environmental Management	15
GEO2460	Environment and Sustainability on the Isles of Scilly [See note b above]	15
GEO2461	Second Year Tutorials	15
GEO2462	Research Design and Methods	15
LAW2016C	Environmental Regulation and Redress	15

Optional modules

Code	Module	Credits
GeoP S2 BSc-MSci ES opt 2021-2		
BIO2406	Biodiversity and Conservation	15
BIO2407	Population and Community Ecology	15
BIO2425	Introduction to Ecological Consultancy	15
BIO2432	Exploitation of the Sea	15
BIO2441	Applied Insect Ecology	15
BIO2451	Evolution of Human Societies	15
GEO2442	The Politics of Climate Change and Energy	15
GEO2444	Landscape Evolution	15
GEO2445	Rural Social Issues	15
GEO2450	Biogeography	15
GEO2451	Ice Sheets: Glaciology, Climate and the Oceans	15
GEO2454	Waste and Society	15
GEO2457	Physical Ocean Processes	15
GEO2458	People and Nature	15
GEO2456	Social and Cultural Geographies	15
POC2114	Green Politics in Theory and Practice	15
ECE2002	Health, Place and Wellbeing	15
ECE2001	Oceans and Human Health	15
GeoP Employability opt 2021-2 [See note a above]		
GEO2449	Green Consultants	15
LES2002	Workplace Learning	15

- Less science based than Geology – Geography is usually considered a ‘science’ when applying for Environmental Science.
- Still involves practical work in labs alongside lectures.
- Tends to straddle Biology and Geography.
- Ideal if you want to make your degree more bespoke and take modules out of different departments within a university.

Careers can include:

- Environmental engineer
- Environmental health and safety specialist
- Sustainability officer.
- Environmental lawyer
- Air pollution analyst
- Wildlife biologist
- Environmental consultant
- Geoscientist
- Environmental microbiologist
- Hydrologist

When choosing courses and universities...

No two Geography courses are the same...

- Contact time – more important than you think!
- Optional modules – and their pre-requisites
- Fieldwork trips
- Academics in the department
- Research areas
- Year in industry/abroad?

60 credits of compulsory modules, 60 credits of optional modules.

^a You must choose 30–60 credits from the Human Geography and interdisciplinary Geography modules listed.

^b You may then choose 0–30 credits from other level 5 Geography modules listed.



Compulsory modules

Code	Module	Credits
GEO2311	Ideas in Geography	15
GEO2337	Research Methodologies in Action	15
GEO2338	Doing Human Geography Research	30

Optional modules

The modules we outline here provide examples of what you can expect to learn on this degree course based on recent academic teaching. The precise modules available to you in future years may vary depending on staff availability and research interests, new topics of study, timetabling and student demand.

Code	Module	Credits
GeoS S2 Human-Inter Geog opt for BA Geog 2024–5 see note a above		
GEO2131	Nature, Development and Justice	15
GEO2132	Global Urban Futures	15
GEO2134	Everyday Lives	15
GEO2135	In/visible Spaces of Modern Life	15
GEO2136	Geographies of Migration	15
GEO2317	Climate Change: Science and Society	15
GeoS S2 Physical opt for BA Geog 2024–25 see note b above		
GEO2232	The Cryosphere	15
GEO2233	Landscape Response to Environmental Change: from Source to Sink	15
GEO2234	The 'Anthropocene'	15
GEO2230	Reconstructing Past Environments	15
GEO2235	Ecosystems of the future: climate change, terrestrial feedbacks and nature-based solutions	15

30–45 credits of compulsory modules, 75–90 credits of optional modules.

^c You must choose either GEO3311 or GEO3312.

Compulsory modules

Code	Module	Credits
GEO3311	BA Dissertation [See note c above]	45
GEO3312	BA Dissertation [See note c above]	30

Optional modules

The modules we outline here provide examples of what you can expect to learn on this degree course based on recent academic teaching. The precise modules available to you in future years may vary depending on staff availability and research interests, new topics of study, timetabling and student demand.

Code	Module	Credits
GeoS SF BA Geog opt 2024–5		
GEO3123	Geographies of Material Culture	15
GEO3129	Images of the Earth	15
GEO3146	Digital Geographies	15
GEO3156	Bodies at Work: Contemporary Geographies of Labour and Identity	15
GEO3326	Managing the Climate Emergency	15
GEO3327	Science Communication in a Changing World	15
GEO3239	GIS for Professionals	15
GEO3245	Coastal Systems in a Changing World	15
GEO3227	Weather	15
GEO3148	Berlin Field Course	15
GEO3158	Sustainable Communities Field Course (Avignon - Marseille)	15
GEO3325	Environmental Futures Field Course	15
GEO3144	Geopolitical Cultures	15
GEO3147	Literature, Environment, Activism	15
GEO3157	Southern Urbanism	15
GEO3328	Water Resilience: Challenges and Solutions	15
GEO3223	Landscape Systems Management	15
GEO3225	Climate Change and its Impacts	15
GEO3241	Fire Ecology and Fire Management	15

Year 2 overview

BSc Geography Southampton

You'll take core modules in physical geography. You can learn about remote sensing for earth observation or global water resources.

The highlight is the second year field course, where you will spend a full week in Tenerife with your peers learning about everything from life on a volcanic island (volcanology, biodiversity, hazards and natural resources) to how to design and execute your own field project. This is compulsory and there is no cost to attend.

Beyond the core modules, there are a wide range of other options to choose from. For example, you can learn the basic concepts and techniques behind geographic information systems.

You'll also go on an overseas field course to explore physical environments. Here, you'll get hands-on experience of collecting, analysing and presenting data.

You can take up to 2 modules outside geography For example, you could explore:

- environmental impact assessment
- global health issues
- social enterprise

Required modules

You are required to take the following modules:

Field Research in Human & Development Geography (30 credits)

BA Geography Research Tutorials (15 credits)

Geographical Research Skills (15 credits)

Please note that second year field research modules will typically have a week of intensive teaching on a residential field trip, as well as preparatory/follow-up sessions.

Optional modules

(No Title)

You are also required to take sufficient credits to bring your total for the year to 120 credits, from a range of optional modules, some of which fall into thematic areas. The current themes that are highlighted include:

- 1) Urban & Cultural Geography
- 2) Physical Geography & Environmental Science
- 3) Environment & Society
- 4) Development Geography
- 5) Spatial Data Science

Typical optional modules may include:

BA Geography
KCL

Typical optional modules may include:

- Development Geography (15 credits)
- Political Ecology (15 credits)
- Urban & Cultural Geography: Space, Society & Culture (15 credits)
- Foundations of Spatial Data Science (15 credits)
- Principles of Spatial Data Science (15 credits)
- Urban Geography: Exploring the City (15 credits)
- Territory, State & Nation (15 credits)
- Water & Development (15 credits)
- Historical Geographies of Urbanism (15 credits)

The following modules are from the BSc Geography course and may also be taken as optional modules. They typically include the following:

- Natural Hazards (15 credits)
- Climate Variability, Change & Society (15 credits)
- Earth Surface Environments (15 credits)
- Global Environmental Issues: Science & Solutions (15 credits)
- Biogeography & Ecology (15 credits)

BA/Sc Geography Newcastle

You will also have a choice of destinations for your Stage 2 residential field course.

- [The creative and knowledge-based economy: Berlin field course](#)
- [UK field course research project](#)
- [Doing Physical Geography Research: Theory and Practice](#)
- [Emotional Geographies of the City: Vienna/Bratislava or UK urban field course](#)
- [Global Environmental Change](#)
- [Key Methods for Physical Geographers](#)
- [Exploring Everyday Political Geographies in a Divided City: Nicosia Field Course](#)
- [Research Design and Planning for Human Geographers](#)
- [Geohazards](#)
- [Geography Fieldtrip for Module Pre-Registration](#)
- [Glacial Environments](#)
- [Biogeography](#)
- [River Catchment Dynamics](#)
- [Humans vs Nature in the Netherlands \(Netherlands Field course\)](#)
- [Geographies of Memory: Bosnia and Herzegovina Human Geography Field Course](#)
- [Between Two Unions: Ireland Human Geography Field Course](#)
- [Career Development for second year students](#)

A word on Geography internationally...

- QS Top 100 rankings comparing “Geography” courses are unhelpful.
- Liberal Arts
- Global Studies

Miss Harris read Global Governance, Economics and Development at the University of Leiden, Netherlands – talk to her if you need more advice about what Geography-related subjects look like overseas.



Not just about the Russell Group...

MET OFFICE ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIP

University of Reading

COURSES

BA/BSc Entry: BBB/30

BSc Environmental Science with Professional Experience

Full Time: 4 Years

BSc Environmental Science

Full Time: 3 Years

BSc Geography and Economics (Regional Science) with Professional Experience

Full Time: 4 Years | Other: including a placement year

BSc Geography and Economics (Regional Science)

Full Time: 3 Years

BSc Geography (Human and Physical) with Professional Experience

Full Time: 4 Years | Other: including a placement year

BSc Geography (Human and Physical)

Full Time: 3 Years

BSc Geography (Human) with Professional Experience

Full Time: 4 Years | Other: including a placement year

BSc Geography (Human)

Full Time: 3 Years

BSc Geography (Physical) with Professional Experience

Full Time: 4 Years | Other: including a placement year

BSc Geography (Physical)

Full Time: 3 Years



Founded in 2000 and Headquartered at UEA with nearly 100 members ranging from PhD researchers to Professors, the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research represents a substantial body of the UK's expertise on sustainable responses to climate change from across the scientific, engineering, social science and economic communities.

BA/BSc Entry: ABB/32

Courses with great teaching – c. 90% student satisfaction & lecturers who have visited Teddies

OXFORD
BROOKES
UNIVERSITY

BA/BSc Entry: BCC/29



BA/BSc Entry: ABB/32

US
UNIVERSITY
OF SUSSEX

BA/BSc Entry: ABB/32

3rd

in the UK for our research impact in Geography and Environmental Studies in REF 2021 (*Times Higher Education*)

9th

in the UK for Social Sciences (*The Times Higher Education World University Rankings by Subject 2024*)

=14th

in the UK for Geography (*QS World University Rankings by Subject 2024*)

Geography is competitive – what is it about Geography you are actually interested in?

Courses which are more specifically focussed on a particular area of the subject tend to be less competitive. This is not a bad thing, especially if you know which bits of the subject really interest you....!



BA/BSc Geography: AAA/38
BSc Urban Studies: AAB/36
BSc Geology: AAB/36



BA/BSc Geography: Subject specific – AAB-ABB/36-32
Population Sciences: ABB/32
Geology: Subject specific - ABB-BBB



BA/BSc Geography: ABB/33
Environment and Planning: BBB/31



BA Geography: AAB/32 (665 HL)
BSc Geography and Urban and Regional Planning: ABB/32 (655 HL)
BSc Geology ABB/32 (655 HL) – only need 1 science (inc. Geog).

What do I need to be doing?

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NewScientist

GEOGRAPHICAL



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GEOGRAPHY DIRECTIONS



A panoramic view of the Seattle skyline at dusk. The Space Needle is prominent on the left, with its red observation deck glowing. The city's skyscrapers are illuminated by the warm light of the setting sun. In the background, the snow-capped peak of Mount Rainier rises above the city. The sky is a clear, deep blue.

Any Questions?