

WJEC NEWSLETTER: SEPTEMBER 2025

GCSE GEOGRAPHY

Welcome back! We hope you had a wonderful summer, got a good break from teaching and are back in your centres ready to go for the new academic year and ready to start the new QFF GCSE Geography specification with your Year 10 learners. This bulletin provides some important information and links to resources to support you with the delivery of the specification for this academic year. We hope you find these useful to support your teaching, departmental teams and most importantly your learners.

A BIG THANK YOU

I would like to take the opportunity here to say a huge thank you to Fiona Rennie, who many of you will remember from the new GCSE CPD days earlier this year. Fiona's time as GCSE Geography Subject Adviser came to an end in May, and without her hard work on all aspects of the new specification, plus the work she has done with resources and CPD, my job would have been much more difficult. Fiona's knowledge, professionalism and work ethic are second to none and, although we may see her back for future CPD events, we wish her well as she moves on to new horizons.

TEACHING FOR 2025/26: NEW QFF SPECIFICATION FOR YEAR 10

I'm sure many of you have been planning the new GCSE specification and are ready for teaching it for the first time to Year 10 this September. There should have been some updates made to the specification (updating some key terms) and to the Unit 1 Specimen Assessment Material (SAM) document (edits to the migration questions) by the time you read this, so please keep an eye out on the new specification website ([GCSE Geography | Made for Wales](#)) where the specifics and timings of these changes will be communicated to you. The Unit 2 and Unit 4 SAM documents are also being split into NEA Handbooks (both Units), separate NEA forms (both Units), all to be found on the website, and a Candidate Information Pack & Resource Booklet (Unit 4) which will be stored on the Portal. We are also producing annotated exemplars of student responses in English and Welsh for Unit 4, using the SAM document on Solar Power in Newport, that will be available on the website soon. Don't forget to use the new website as well to access the excellent Blended Learning interactive resources and Knowledge Organiser sheets that cover all of Units 1 and 3. Finally, if you are considering entering the new Unit 2 fieldwork NEA in 2026, using one of the two fieldwork topics for that year from the table in the SAM document, then please note that the submission deadline for student responses (via the Surpass system) is February 5th, and will remain the same date for future years. Unit 4 of course is not available in 2026, with the first Candidate Information Pack and Resource Booklet scheduled to be available from the start of September 2026 for examining in 2027.

AUTUMN TERM PROFESSIONAL LEARNING & CPD FOR THE NEW QFF SPECIFICATION

There will be no online feedback or CPD for the current legacy specification, but online sessions are planned for Spring 2026, focussing on 'Preparing to Assess' the new QFF specification Unit 4, which will be marked by centres and moderated by the WJEC. These free online courses will run from 3-45pm to 5pm on Tuesday 10th February (English Medium) and Thursday 12th February (Welsh Medium) and the sign up link is here: [Professional Learning | WJEC](#). There are also general sessions during the Autumn Term to introduce you to the new Blended Learning resources available via this page as well.

TEACHING FOR 2025/26: LEGACY GCSE GEOGRAPHY SPECIFICATION

You will all now of course be aware that the coming year for your Year 11 students will be the final year of teaching for the current legacy GCSE specification. There is no CPD planned for this specification now, but the 2025 Examiners Reports will be available in the Autumn as usual via the legacy specification website ([GCSE Geography](#)) for feedback and advice, and exam preparation for Summer 2026. I'm sure many of you will have planned and undertaken your Unit 3 fieldwork already, but a reminder is worth it that for this year the Conceptual Framework is Inequality and the Methodological Approach is Use of Transects, the work must be completed and securely filed away by 31st October, the NEA paper becomes live on the Portal from 1st November to 31st December and that all student work must be sent to the WJEC in the usual way by no later than Friday 16th January 2026. Please don't forget to email in your fieldwork statements when you send in the student work. It's also worth another reminder here that your learners should ideally undertake two fieldwork investigations in contrasting locations for the NEA. Many of you have enquired about this however and we can confirm that it is possible to do the two pieces of fieldwork in one day at the same location, for example a study on Aberystwyth beach in the morning and a different study in Aberystwyth CBD in the afternoon, if this is easier for you to organise in your centres. You are still required to complete two days of fieldwork though, and include these on the centre declarations, but the second day can be undertaken at any time in the year and can be used to support learning during the course or for revision.

GA CONFERENCE 2025

An early reminder for your diaries – the 2026 Geographical Association Conference will be held from 8th to 10th April at Sheffield City College. We will be there as always with a stand and a couple of sessions/lectures. It's always an excellent event and is invaluable CPD so it would be great to see a lot of WJEC Geographers there.

EXAMINING FOR WJEC

With the new QFF specification about to start, there will be many opportunities to become an appointee and examine for WJEC in summer 2026. The vast majority of our current WJEC GCSE examining teams are moving across to the new specification after completing their work on the legacy specification, but all Units will have potential vacancies, and we will be particularly looking for potential moderators for the new Unit 4. Although this starts in summer 2027, we are looking to put a team together to work with our Principal and Assistant Principal Moderators now. As an Examiner, you will gain invaluable insight into the assessment process at WJEC, enhance your skill set, and increase your understanding of the subject content. All examiner training conferences in 2026 will be held online via Teams. We welcome Welsh medium applications for all Units. Please register your interest now. Full details can be found on our Appointees page at <https://appointees.wjec.co.uk>.

EDI SPECIFICATION OVERVIEW

I'd like to give you another reminder that we have a superb EDI overview document on the current GCSE Geog specification, written by Hina Robinson, Teacher of Geography and Diversity Lead at Southend High School for Girls. Hina was also President of the Geographical Association for 2024/25. This document gives detailed and up-to-date guidance to teachers on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and where to consider it alongside suggested background material within the course. The document has notes, links and key information to cover the whole specifications and can be found here: [WJEC Educational Resources Website](#). Hina is writing a similar document for the new specification, which we hope to publish soon.

CYNEFIN MAGAZINE

Edition 4 of our GCSE and A Level Geography magazine Cynefin is now in production (Editions 1, 2 and 3 are available via our website: [Resource WJEC Educational Resources Website](#)). For Edition 4, please get in touch if you have any ideas on articles you would like to see or even better if you would like to contribute yourself. We are always looking for new contributors with new ideas and look forward to hearing from you!

All the best with the teaching for the new academic year. Please get in touch if we can assist you in any way.

Rob and Amy

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GET IN TOUCH

If you have any queries, please email GCSEGeography@wjec.co.uk or phone us on 029 2026 5114.