

## Is this subject right for me?

Are you interested in the environmental issues such as wildlife conservation, pollution, global climate change and sustainability which affect our planet right now?

Do you want to learn more about the scientific explanations for the changes to our environment?

Are you keen to understand some of the economic and political agendas surrounding environmental issues?

Environmental issues are hot topics in the media – everyone seems to have an opinion about climate change, energy use and waste disposal. After all, these are very real issues which touch our everyday lives.

But peoples' opinions and even the scientific evidence seem to be divided. Are the environmental problems real? What is the scientific evidence? Can they be solved?

Environmental Studies will give you the opportunity to gain a deep and well-informed insight into the environment and the scientific processes that control and affect it. You will be able to make your own judgements about the decisions that are made.

As part of a group of Science or Arts A Level courses, Environmental Studies provides an ideal base for employment, a range of vocational qualifications and a very wide variety of Higher Education courses, including degrees in areas related to the environment, Geography, Geology, Science, climate, planning and teaching.

## What is the course content?

The AS course is composed of two units:

### Unit 1: The Living Environment

An introduction to the biodiversity of life on Planet Earth. You will study the reasons why conservation of life on Earth is important and the methods used for

effective conservation in the UK, coral reefs, Antarctica and tropical rainforests. You will study the ecological relationships between organisms and their abiotic and biotic environments to be able to make decisions about problem management.

### Unit 2: The Physical Environment

You will understand that physical resources such as atmospheric gases, water and mineral nutrients are essential for life on Earth and that humans exploit and manage physical resources to provide higher material living standards. You will look at the idea that the use of many of these resources is unsustainable.

The A level course is also composed of two units:

### Unit 3: Energy Resources and Environmental Pollution

You will examine how future problems of energy supply are investigated and potentially resolved. You will understand how pollutants cause environmental damage and the strategies which can be used to minimise releases, treat effluents and manage the damage caused.

### Unit 4: Biological Resources and Sustainability

You will study the factors controlling human population growth in relation to the demands placed upon the planet's resources and life-support systems. You will analyse food production and forestry systems emphasising the limiting factors affecting productivity, the environmental problems caused by these systems and the ways in which problems can be addressed.

## How will your work be assessed?

The AS and A level course are assessed entirely by external examination. There is no coursework component for Environmental Studies.

AS assessment:

Two written exams consisting of short-answer and structured questions.

A level assessment:

Two written exams consisting of short-answer, structured data analysis and essay questions.

**What are the entry requirements?**

You will need to achieve a grade C in Double Science GCSE (or separate Sciences) or C in Environmental Science GCSE in addition to the general entry requirements for studying an Advanced level course.

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# **Environmental Studies**

## AS and A Level