



DH09AT

June 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

### A-Level Geography Fieldwork and Non-Examined Assessment (NEA)

As part of their A-Level Geography course, students are required to complete a Non-Examined Assessment (NEA). This will account for 20% of their final grade and involves collecting fieldwork data in order to answer a geographical enquiry question of their choice.

Students will need to carefully consider their choice of NEA whether it be a Physical Geography investigation or a Human Geography one. They need to identify an issue within Geography that they find of interest, through what they have studied or what is happening in their local area or anywhere of their choice (as long as it is accessible). The theme or topic must be from the Pearson Edexcel Geography A-level Specification, but it can be a unit that is not being currently studied, for example, glaciated landscapes, diverse places etc.

Once an investigation idea is thought of, it is vital that students begin wider reading around the subject, to discover the impacts and geographical processes surrounding their chosen theme. These will then lead naturally into students finalising research questions to give their enquiry a structure. At this stage, an official NEA proposal form needs to be completed and signed off by their mentor, either myself or Mrs McVey, by **Monday 6 July**. See the NEA proposal form attached.

Students can choose to use data they collect during the four compulsory fieldwork days. Data has already been collected at Delamere Forest and in various places in Liverpool, most notably the Baltic Triangle, taking advantage of the whole Geography cohort collecting a sizeable amount of data. Students may wish to use the data from Formby dunes on Monday 22 June and a final fieldwork day looking at quality of life and sustainability in West Kirby, hopefully before the end of term, which will involve further data collection.

As these fieldwork days demonstrate data collection skills and sampling strategies, students often prefer to transfer these skills and choose a topic and study location of their choice and make their own arrangements for data collection. From our experience at WKGS, this is a successful approach as students take ownership over their study, choosing an enquiry they show a keen interest in and therefore leading to more successful project outcomes.

If collecting their own data, students are expected to complete a risk assessment and place a high priority over their health and safety. Students can benefit by collecting data with each other in the field and where possible we encourage students to try to work in small groups by helping each other. However, this is not compulsory, and it is acceptable for a family member to accompany a student collecting data. For safety reasons, please ensure your child/ward does not undertake the data collection alone. Students must note that they are expected to produce an independent piece of work and that two or more identical titles will not be acceptable.

Please see the attached FAQ sheet for further details about the NEA. It outlines the various stages of the whole NEA process and important deadlines that students must adhere to so that it does not disrupt their preparation for the Mock Examinations in January 2027.

Thank you in anticipation of your support.

Yours faithfully

Mr D Houghton



## NEA FAQs

### 1. What is the NEA?

The purpose of the NEA is to assess students' skills in completing a geographical enquiry independently. Students are required to undertake an independent investigation which involves fieldwork and the subsequent written report which accounts for 20% of their final grade at A-level.

It is recommended that students write between 3000 and 4000 words for their independent investigation. Students will not be penalised on the basis of the length of their investigation. However, excessively high or low word counts may restrict a student's ability to evidence the skills outlined in the marking criteria.

Students are free to choose a topic for investigation that they are interested in but it must be directly related to the Pearson Edexcel A-Level Geography Specification. Students may discuss together, and with their teacher, ideas and research for appropriate geographical research questions but must finalise the title of their investigation independently. Students will then complete and submit their NEA proposal on the official Pearson Edexcel NEA proposal form (see attached), which will be agreed and signed off by their teacher (NEA mentor).

The student's investigation will incorporate fieldwork data (collected individually or as part of a group) and own research/secondary data. The student's written report will evidence independent analysis and evaluation of data, presentation of data findings and extended writing.

The different stages of the independent investigation and the level of independence required are outlined below:

Investigation stage	Level of independence required	What this means in practice?
1. Exploring focus	Collaboration allowed	Candidates may discuss together, and with their teacher, ideas and research for appropriate geographical questions. It is not acceptable for candidates to choose from a list of titles or investigations provided by the centre (school).
2. Title of investigation, research questions, purpose of investigation	Independent work	Candidates must finalise the draft title of their investigation on their own. The Geography Independent Investigation Form (NEA proposal) is submitted which must provide clear justification and contextualisation of how their enquiry will help them to address their title and explore their theme in relation to the chosen geographical location.
3. Devising methodology and sampling framework	Collaboration allowed	Candidates may collaborate when planning and selecting methodologies/sampling strategies
4. Primary data collection	Collaboration allowed	Primary data collection may be carried out individually or in groups.
5. Secondary data collection	Independent work	Must be carried out independently. Candidates select secondary sources of data on their own.
6. Data/information presentation	Independent work	Candidates select and use appropriate data presentation methods on their own.
7. Data analysis and explanation / interpretation	Independent work	Candidates select and use appropriate data analysis techniques and independently interpret and analyse the results on their own.
8. Conclusion and evaluation	Independent work	Candidates evaluate the findings of their investigation and reach a balanced and supported conclusion on their own.



## 2. How will teachers support students?

The Geography Department are supporting students by teaching the required techniques for each stage of the investigation. This will start in lessons immediately after students' end of year examinations. Students should make use of the knowledge gained on their fieldtrips so far and resources available on Teams (including the marking criteria of the NEA).

Students will be assigned an NEA mentor, either me or Mrs McVey (depending on theme of the investigation) and will be given individual guidance on how they can complete and submit an NEA proposal form which teachers will confirm are in line with examination board regulations. Teachers will also offer further general guidance on any necessary amendments before signing off the NEA proposal form. This will signify that the student can continue on to the next stages of their investigation. It is important to note that this official Pearson Edexcel Geography Independent Investigation Form will be submitted to the exam board together with their finished NEA so it is important that they dedicate sufficient time and effort to complete it to the best of their ability.

Teachers are not permitted to teach techniques to individual students specifically for their own investigation. In addition, the exam board outline that teachers must not:

- Provide candidates with a choice of titles or tasks from which the candidates then choose.
- Give detailed feedback to individual candidates about how to improve work to meet the assessment criteria. The guidance provided prior to final submission should only enable candidates to take the initiative in making amendments, rather than detailing what amendments should be made.
- Mark work provisionally and share that mark so that the candidates may improve it.
- Give guidance on how to make improvements to the draft in order to meet the assessment criteria so that the candidates are no longer in independent learning.

## 3. When will students do this in school?

Students were first introduced to the NEA during their Delamere Forest fieldtrip on the 2 June, immediately after the Summer half-term. After their end of year examinations, week commencing 22 June they will begin the planning stages of their investigation in lessons. Students will continue to be taught techniques needed and attend at least one meeting with their NEA mentor throughout the rest of the Summer Term.

We expect students to have collected their primary data (either individually or in groups) by the time they return to school in September. Students should also not hesitate to start the written aspect of their investigation, which will include wider reading, writing an introduction and a methodology due on Monday 21 September.

Students will continue to be taught the techniques needed for the final sessions of their report in specially designed lessons throughout the Autumn Term in Year 13.

## 4. When are the deadlines?

Monday 6 July 2026	Geography Independent Investigation Form (NEA proposal) submitted and approved by teachers.
Wednesday 2 September	All primary data collected (either individually or in groups).
Monday 28 September	Introduction and methodology*
Monday 9 November	Data presentation and analysis*
Monday 7 December	Conclusion and evaluation*
Wednesday 16 December	Final submission*

*\*As per exam board guidelines, students will not receive individual detailed feedback on completion of work. These deadlines are to monitor student completion and enable mentoring prior to the final deadline. Students will not have an opportunity to improve work following the 16 December deadline.*

## Geography independent investigation form

<b>Candidate name</b>	<b>Candidate number</b>	<b>Examination Series</b> Summer 2026
<b>Centre name</b> West Kirby Grammar School		<b>Centre number</b> 34775
<b>Investigation title</b>	<b>How the title links to specification content</b>	
<b>Planned investigation hypothesis or question/sub-questions</b>		
<b>Investigation focus – indication of how the enquiry will enable the candidate to address their investigation title and explore their theme in relation to the chosen geographical area.</b>		
<b>Planned methodology – indication of qualitative and/or quantitative techniques including primary and, if relevant, secondary data collection techniques, indication of the planned sampling strategy or strategies.</b>		<b>Individual/Group data collection</b> <i>(Delete as appropriate)</i>
<b>Teacher's approval and comments</b>		
<b>Teacher signature</b>		<b>Date</b>