



Geography: 30 reasons why it really matters

**Royal
Geographical
Society**


with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning

#Choosegeography



Steve Brace



Head of
Education and
Outdoor
Learning



2020

www.rgs.org/schools

@RGS_IBGSchools

@stevebracegeog



The Royal Geographical Society (with IBG)

**Royal
Geographical
Society**
with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning

- The learned and professional body for geography
- Schools, higher education, with the professions and public
- 16,000 Fellows
- A focus on the discipline and subject knowledge



**Royal
Geographical
Society**
with IBG

“Advancing geography and geographical learning”
www.rgs.org/schools



Contributions from the community. Geography:

**Royal
Geographical
Society**

with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning

- helps young people understand the places where they live
- helps children and young people to begin to make sense of the fast changing, highly interconnected world
- provides students with an opportunity to identify their importance and responsibility within the wider world
- connects the local with the global
- gives students the tools to not only analyse the world, but participate in the making of new worlds
- unites us, binds us, and reveals our true 'place' on this planet
- knowing why 'where' matters
- enables students to understand and recognise the complexity of global issues

#1 We have a fashion style ... just for us

**Royal
Geographical
Society**
with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning



● ● ● | Geography is the language
of our landscapes:
now & in the future

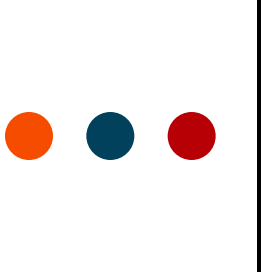
**Royal
Geographical
Society**
with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning

- Whether in human or physical landscapes, geography give us the knowledge and skills to better understand the challenges of the present & approach the future with positive agency



- What would you pupils miss if they didn't study geography?



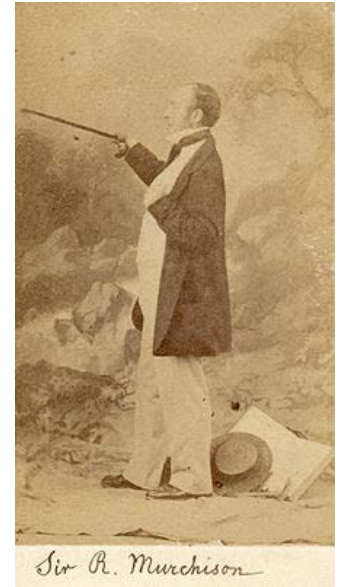
Geography has always been more than (just) content

**Royal
Geographical
Society**
with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning

We speak of geography, not as a barren catalogue of names and facts but as a science that ought to be taught in a liberal way, with abundant appliances of maps, models and illustrations.

Sir Roderick Murchison President and Council of the RGS (1871)



Geography helps us understand the world. It gives us the science, the data, the insights to plan for the future (and) it's an incredibly exciting subject.

Nick Crane RGS President (2015-18)



Geography helps answer the issues of our age

Royal Geographical Society
with IBG

Advancing geography and geographical learning



Government Office for Science

Foresight



Land Use Futures:

Making the most of land in the 21st century

FINAL PROJECT REPORT



Government Office for Science

Foresight

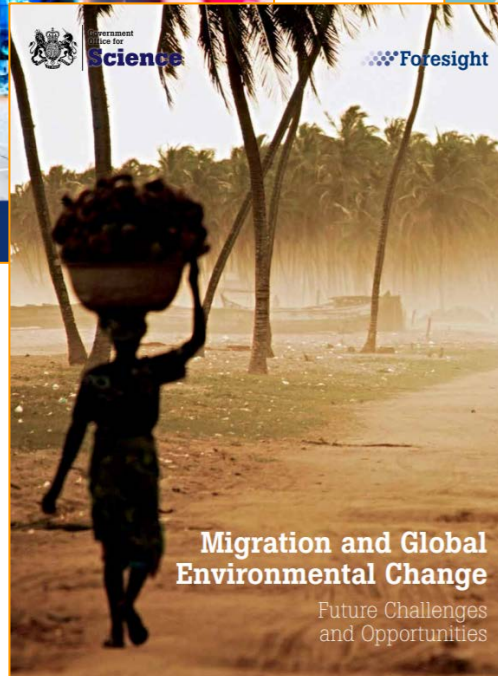
Future Identities

Changing identities in the UK: the next 10 years



Government Office for Science

Foresight



Migration and Global Environmental Change

Future Challenges and Opportunities



Government Office for Science

Foresight

Foresight Future of the Sea

A Report from the Government Chief Scientific Adviser



Foresight Future Flooding

Executive Summary

This report is intended for:

Policy-makers in central and regional Government and the private sector. It will also be of interest to a wide range of professionals, whose work is affected by flooding and coastal erosion, including planners, environmentalists, those in business, social scientists, researchers and flood managers.

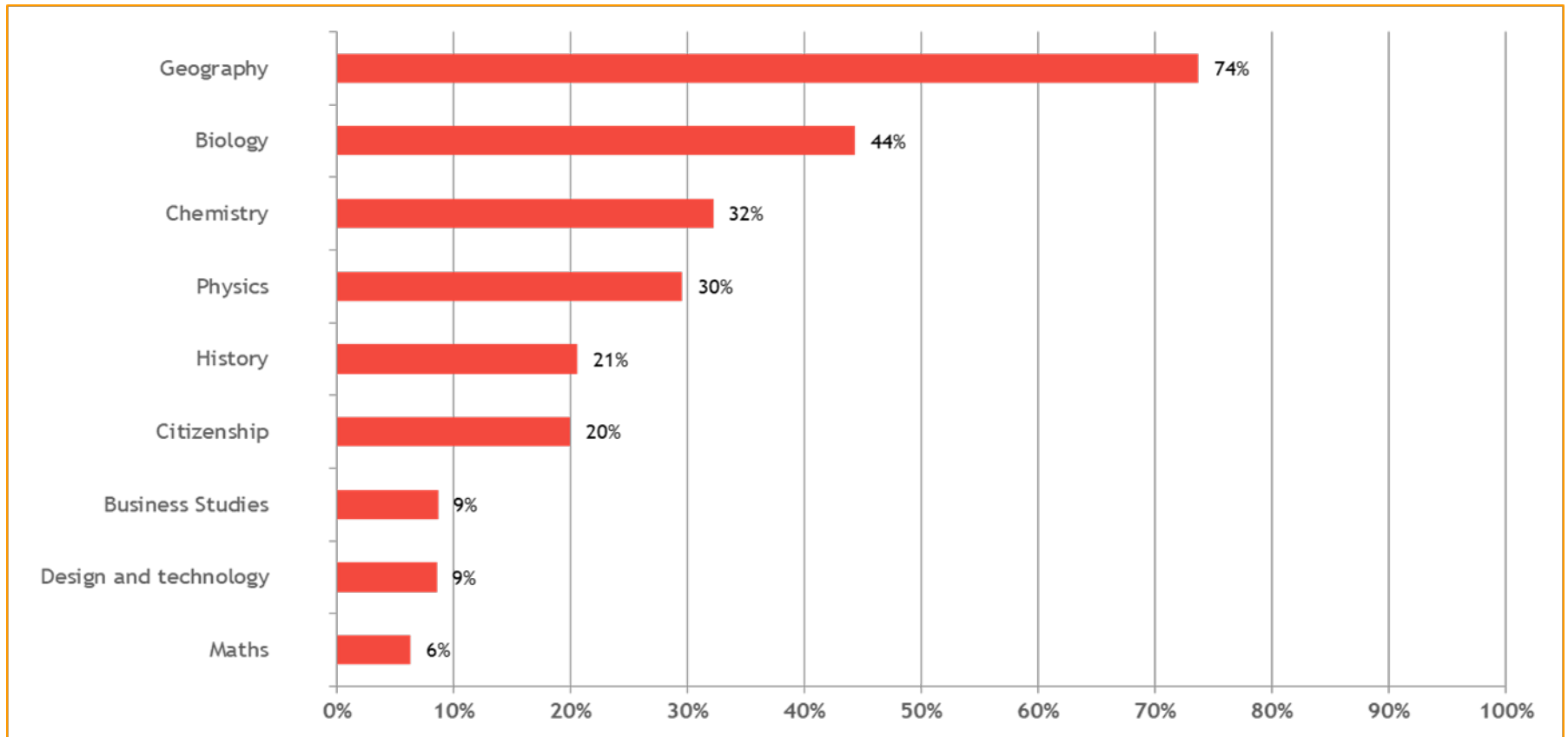
This report has been produced by the Flood and Coastal Defence project of the Foresight programme. Foresight is run by the Office of Science and Technology under the direction of the Chief Scientific Adviser to HM Government. Foresight creates challenging visions of the future to ensure effective strategies now.

Geography GCSE is the subject for 'this' time

**Royal
Geographical
Society**

with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning

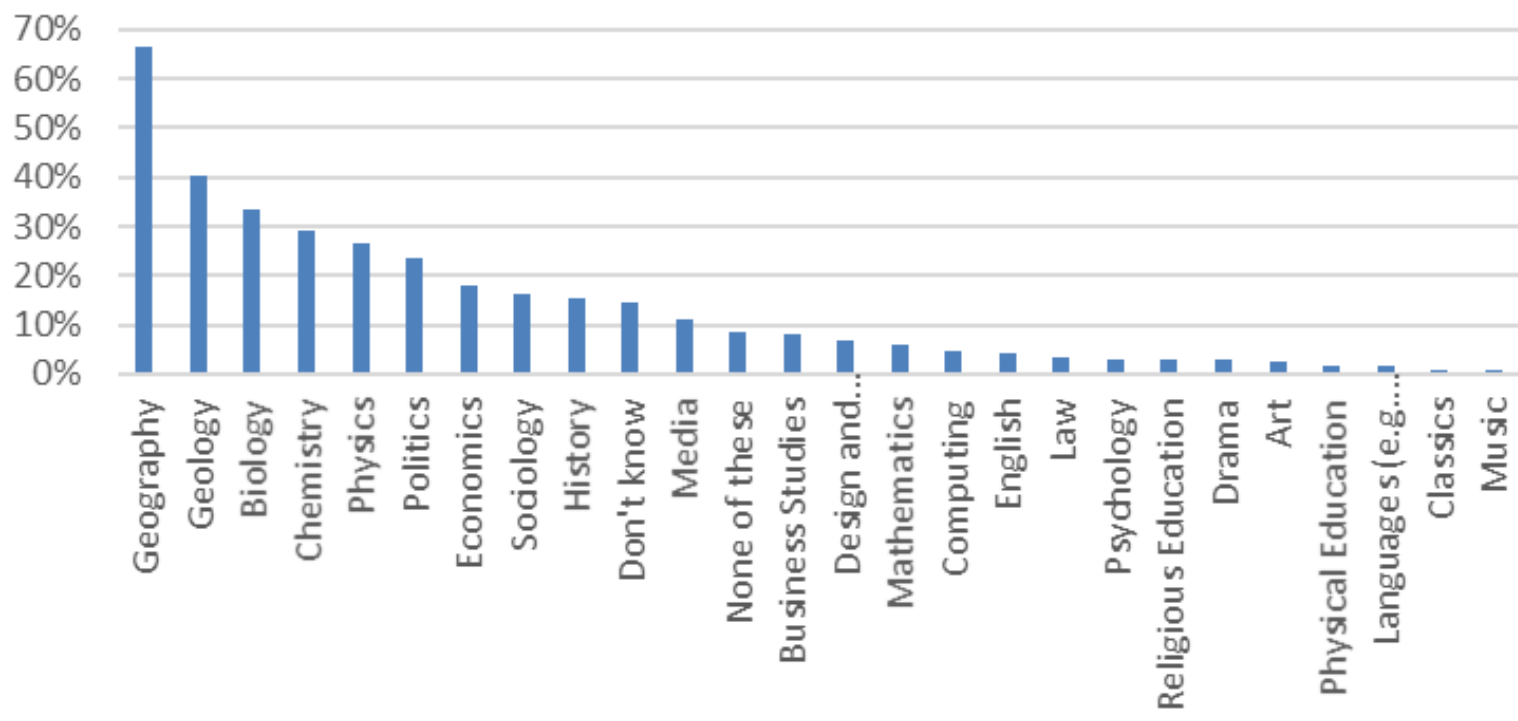


YouGov Q1. Which, if any, of the following GCSE subjects (i.e. a qualification for 14 to 16 year olds) do you think currently help teach children about climate change?



So is A Level geography

A Level subjects that teach about climate change
(YouGov/RGS 2020)





Geography entries have been growing

**Royal
Geographical
Society**

with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning

GCSE

- 265,000 students
- Geography the 6th most popular subject at GCSE level
- 50% more entries than 2011
- 2010 27% of cohort took geography. 2018 40+%

A Level

- ~35,000 students in England, Wales and Northern Ireland sat an A Level
- Increase on 2018 (& recovered ~50% of the 2017 drop)

Higher Education

* Expanding numbers in HE from ~5,000 pa to ~6,500 pa



GCSE growth has made the subject more representative (... but)

- GCSE growth has come disproportionately from those students previously less likely to study geography i.e.
 - BAME, disadvantaged, lower prior attainment, and those studying in comprehensive school
 - **But** more work to do to support such pupils continuing their geography into A Level and degree



In HE we are a 'part-STEM' subject

**Royal
Geographical
Society**

with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning

*A number of subjects contribute to the provision of STEM skills, STEM learning and research, and to the STEM workforce. **Geography is one such discipline (formally recognised by Hefce as 'part-STEM' in higher education).***

RGS evidence to House of Commons Science and Technology Committee Inquiry into STEM skills gap (2017)

Closing the STEM skills gap

Our written evidence to the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee inquiry into the STEM skills gap highlights geography's role in developing quantitative skills with reference to Society projects and work.

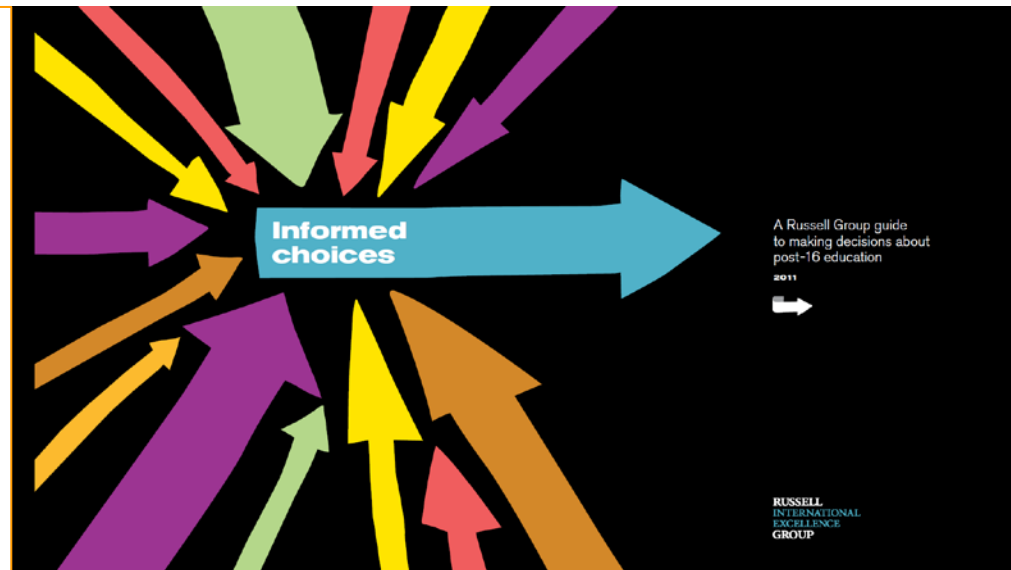
A Level Geography supports entry into HE

**Royal
Geographical
Society**
with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning

Subjects that can be viewed as 'facilitating' subjects are:

- Mathematics and Further Maths
- English
- Physics
- Biology
- Chemistry
- **Geography**
- History
- Languages (Classical and Modern)



These 'facilitating subjects' are the subject most likely to be required or preferred for entry to degree courses, and choosing them will keep more options open to you at university (2011)

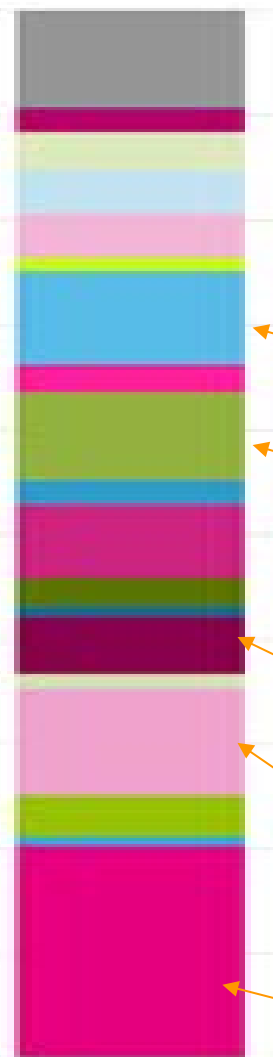


Geography opens doors to *other* degrees

**Royal
Geographical
Society**

with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning



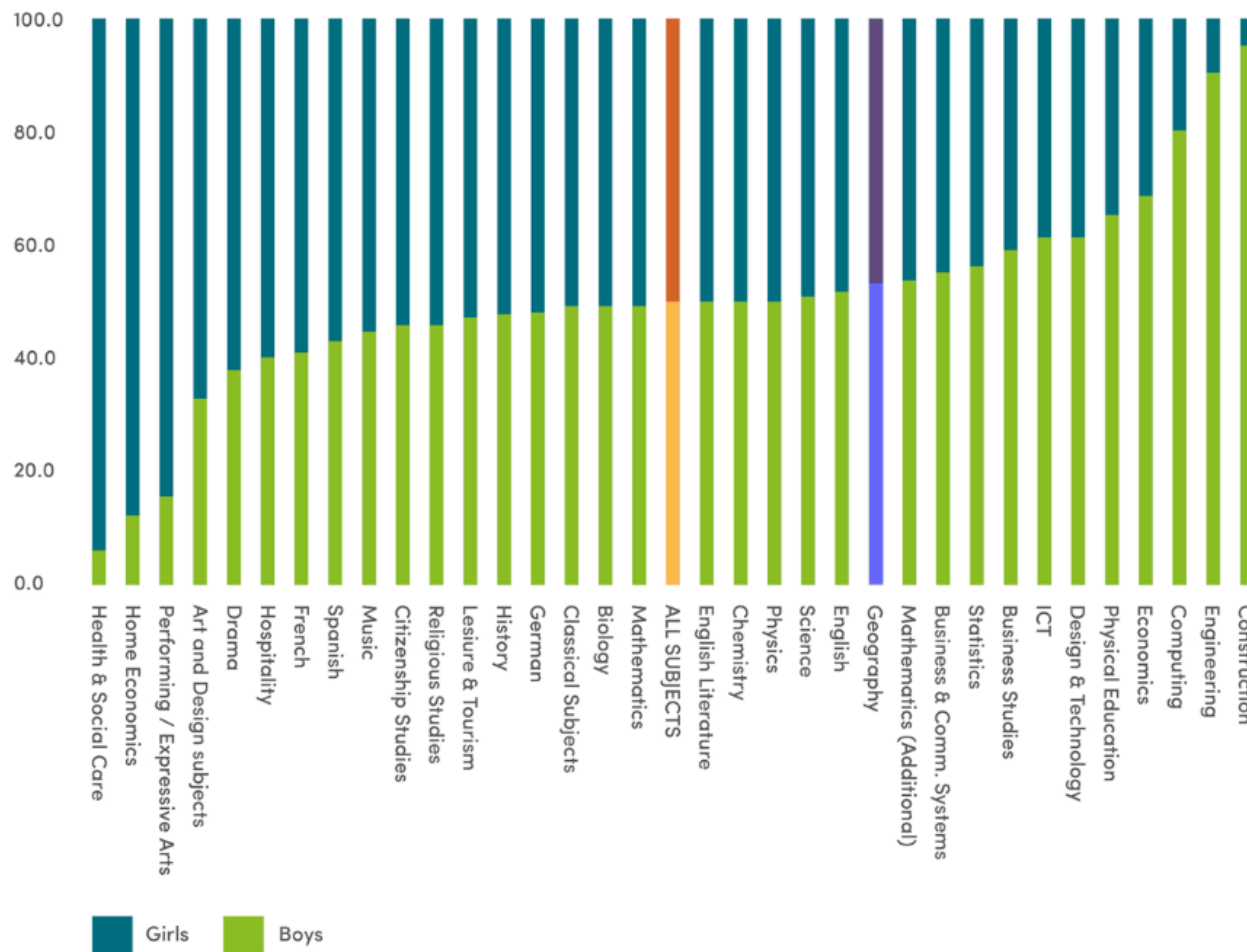
- Did not progress to a degree
- Combined
- Education
- Creative arts & design
- History & philosophical studies
- Languages
- Mass communications & documentation
- Business & Administrative studies
- Law
- Social studies
- Architecture, building & planning
- Computer science
- Engineering & technology
- Mathematical sciences
- Physical sciences
- Agriculture & related
- Veterinary science
- Biological sciences
- Subjects allied to medicine
- Medicine & dentistry
- Geography

Geography has the best gender balance

Royal Geographical Society
with IBG

Advancing geography and geographical learning

Difference between boys' and girls' subject choices at GCSE (UK, 2017)



HE
F 56% M 44%

A Level
F 51% M 49%

GCSE
F 46% M 54%

F outperform M
at GCSE & A
Level



Geography is now part of Government evaluations

**Royal
Geographical
Society**

with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning



HM Treasury



Magenta Book

Central Government guidance on
evaluation

March 2020

“There is a requirement to understand if the same results would be achieved in a different place or context.”

Magenta Book

You can be a demigod & forge a great career

**Royal
Geographical
Society**

with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning



Dr Kate Edwards CGeog @geogrify

* Microsoft's first Geopolitical Strategist

* 6 years at Google

* listed as one of "The 10 Most Powerful Women In Gaming" in 2013 by Fortune

* 2014 she was named as one of the video games industry's six "People of the Year"

View RGS 'Digital Worlds' lecture by Kate



**what is real,
what is represented,
and what is perceived**





The Civil Service has a Head of Geography

**Royal
Geographical
Society**

with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning



David Wood
@GovHeadGeog

Geography is part of
the Government
Science and
Engineering Profession

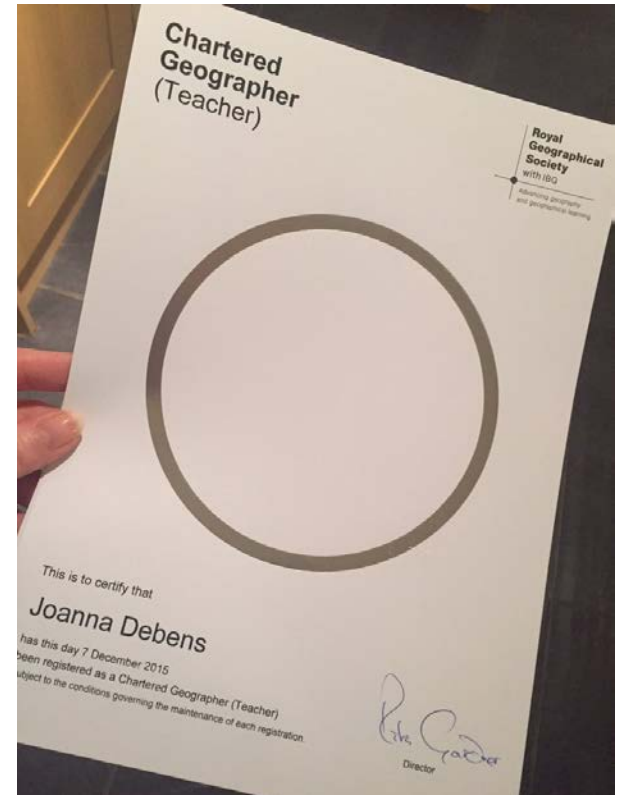
And there are over
1,000 like him working
in the Civil Service and
Government Agencies

It's official ... geographers are
'professionals'

**Royal
Geographical
Society**
with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning

- Chartered Geographer means geographers are recognised in the same way as other professions (accountants, engineers, environmentalist etc)
- See CGeog (Teach)

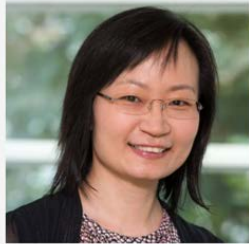


*Jo Coles @GeoDebs
So I got some more letters
after my name today
#CGeog*

I'm a geographer and proud of my career

Royal Geographical Society
with IBG

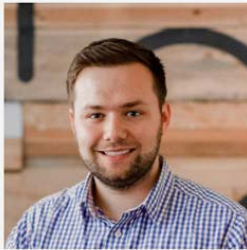
Advancing geography
and geographical learning



Dr Kit Ying Angel Ng - Senior Geomorphologist

Dr Kit Ying Angel Ng is a Senior Geomorphologist at Arup, based in London.

◇ MID CAREER, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY, BUSINESS AND INNOVATION



Owen Miller - Problem Solving Analyst

Owen Miller is a Problem Solving Analyst for Thames Valley Police.

◇ EARLY CAREER, GOVERNMENT AND POLICY, GEOSPATIAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS



Layla Batchellier - Communications and Engagement Manager

Layla Batchellier is the Communications and Engagement Manager for the RRS Sir David Attenborough at the British Antarctic Survey.

◇ EARLY CAREER, COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT



Dr Andy Markham - Company Director

Dr Andy Markham is the Company Director of Hydrobiology.

◇ SENIOR POSITIONS, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND OWN BUSINESS



Terri Freemantle - Senior Earth Observations Specialist

Terri Freemantle is a Senior Earth Observations Specialist for Satellite Applications Catapult.

◇ MID CAREER, GEOSPATIAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL



Chipo Meke - Management Consultant

Chipo Meke is a Management Consultant for KMPG in London.

◇ EARLY CAREER, BUSINESS AND INNOVATION



Kevin Lee - Assistant Desk Officer

Kevin Lee is Assistant Desk Officer at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, based in London, UK.

◇ EARLY CAREER, GOVERNMENT AND POLICY, INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Lucy Allriott - Management Consultant

Lucy Allriott is a Management Consultant at PwC. Although she is based in London, UK, she has worked on projects all over the world.



Cengizhan Sehir - Global Trade Programme Manager for the Americas and Turkey

Cengizhan Sehir is a Global Trade Programme Manager for Americas and Turkey at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, based in London, UK.



Farhasaad Shahid - Communications Associate

Farhasaad Shahid is a Communications Associate at the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the UN Refugee Agency, and is based in Stockholm, Sweden.



Lieutenant Colonel Paul Hammett - Commanding Officer

Lieutenant Colonel Paul Hammett is Commanding Officer of the 42 Engineer Regiment (Geographic) at the British Army, Ministry of Defence.



Dr Anjana Khatwa - Programme Manager for Learning

Dr Anjana Khatwa is Programme Manager for Learning at the Jurassic Coast Trust, based in Dorset, UK.

◇ MID CAREER, EDUCATION



You can impress a Princess

**Royal
Geographical
Society**

with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning



'I hope to learn what more we all can do to help prevent and mitigate this impending global catastrophe'



GCSE Geography has
increased its BAME uptake
...*but* drops off at A Level

A more representative GCSE uptake (A Level)

○ White	42%	(13%)
○ Chinese	52%	(7%)
○ Asian	43%	(6%)
○ Black/Black British	37%	(5%)

More work needed to support BAME students into geography

Royal Geographical Society
with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning

- Victoria Ayodeji
- Dr Pat Noxolo
- Cengizhan Sehir
- Shajiyah Begum
- Prof Ash Amin





Students enjoy studying geography

**Royal
Geographical
Society**
with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning

- Geography undergraduate students regularly report some of the highest National Student Satisfaction scores for their experience of studying geography
- As a consequent they are more likely to complete their degrees and less likely to drop out.
- Geography has the third lowest drop out rate of all subjects





Geographers are more like to be in work

- Five years after graduation geography graduates have an **above average likelihood of gaining employment.**
- Geographer employment rates **outperform many other disciplines,** including politics, physics and history.



Geographers earn above graduate salaries

- Geography graduate earnings **outperform** many other subjects, including technology, biosciences and history
- Geographers' salaries are above the average for graduates:
 - 2% more for men
 - 10% for women



Earnings - comparison with other subjects

- For male geography graduates, mean lifetime earnings were only surpassed by five other subjects, (inc economics, law & medicine).
- The earnings of female geography graduates outperformed those of numerous other subjects, including biosciences, languages and education.

#ChooseGeography

Geographical data is vital for our lives - in work, business, policy, health & leisure

Royal
Geographical
Society
with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning

- OS makes 10,000 *daily* changes to Britain's base map
- Online maps are the 3rd most popular app to download
- South Korea's COVID success: *'a patient's movement can be compared against those of earlier patients using GIS'*



Prof Jung Won Sonn
@theconversation

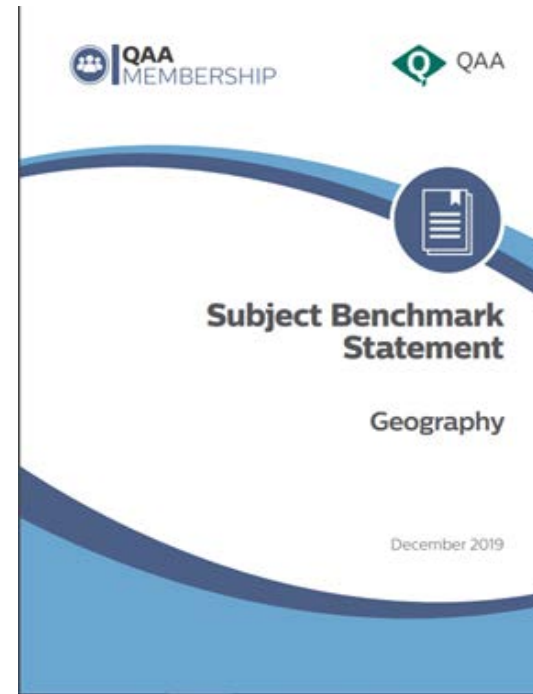
What a geographical analysis brings

Royal Geographical Society
with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning

Geographers are adept at bringing together perspectives from multiple subjects, thinking laterally across debates, synthesising materials, and holding ideas in creative tension.

Subject Benchmark Geography



One area that is relatively underplayed in the current (school) curriculum is developing investigation using GIS data
Royal Society



The economic value of geo spatial data

Royal
Geographical
Society
with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning



Geospatial
Commission

Part of [Cabinet Office](#)

- Data is the raw materials of the 21st century. More than 80% of these data have a locational element (geospatial data). The economic value of the global geospatial sector is estimated, in 2017, at more than US\$500B.

(British Academy)

- Geo-spatial commission. The UK can gain *£11 Billion* from better use of geospatial data
- Esri is a *\$1 Billion* global company



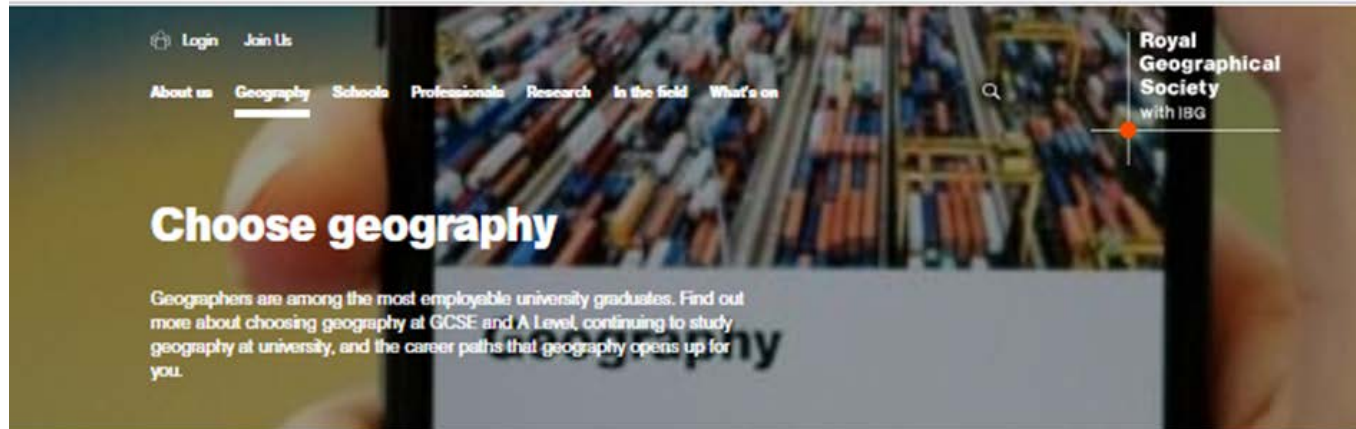
Jack Dangermond founder Esri discussing GIS with Will.I.Am

We've a community committed to #choosegeography

Royal Geographical Society

with IBG

Advancing geography and geographical learning



Watch and discover why you should choose geography...



If this is the worse people say
about geography teachers we
don't need to worry

**Royal
Geographical
Society**
with IBG

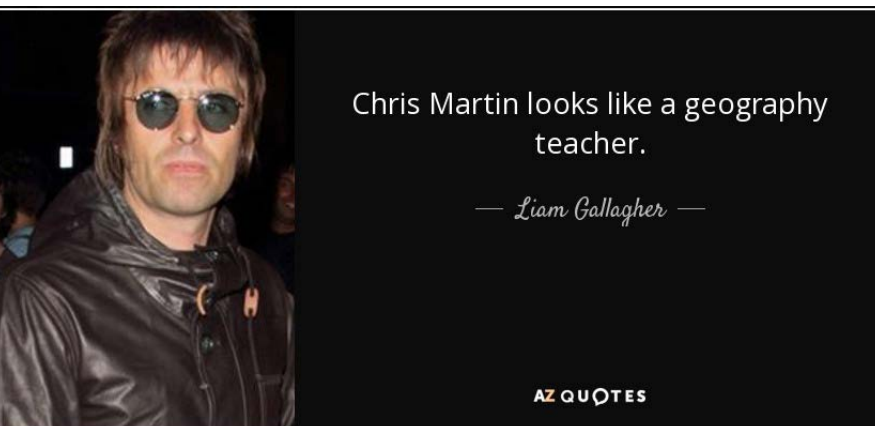
Advancing geography
and geographical learning



“Jeremy Corbyn
looks like a
geography
supply teacher”
TES 29.09.15.



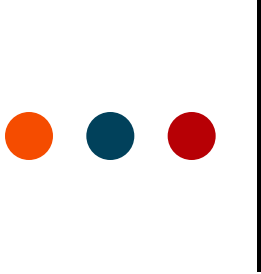
“Lionel Messi dresses like your
old geography teacher”



*His (Bernie Sanders)
geography teacher shoes*



Search ▾ UK edition ▾
**The
Guardian**



Geography: a subject for now and the future

**Royal
Geographical
Society**
with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning

*Geography illuminates the
past, explains the present
and prepares us for the
future.*

*What could be more
important than that?*

Michael Palin,
Past-President RGS-IBG



www.rgs.org



What are your reason/s

- For your departmental mission statement
- For your team's CPD
- To underpin your curriculum
- For your young people to contextualize their geographical studies
- For your young people, and their parents, to encourage future study and careers through geography



Thank you

**Royal
Geographical
Society**
with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning

- Steve Brace
- @stevebracegeog
- @RGS_IBGschools
- S.brace@rgs.org