Your notes

GCSE Geography: revision notes

UK physical landscapes

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Upland and lowland areas

- The UK's **uplands** are mostly in the north and west: the Scottish Highlands, the Lake District, the Pennines, Snowdonia (Eryri) and Dartmoor. They are made of harder, older rocks, such as granite (igneous) and slate (metamorphic), which resist erosion.
- The **lowlands** are mostly in the south and east, such as East Anglia and the London Basin. They are made of softer, younger **sedimentary rocks**, such as chalk and clay.
- Ben Nevis (1,345 m), in the Scottish Highlands, is the UK's highest mountain.

Rivers and coasts

- Major rivers include the Severn (the UK's longest, at about 350 km), the Thames, the Trent, the Tees and the Tyne.
- The UK has a long, varied coastline with cliffs, bays, beaches, spits and estuaries.

What shapes landscapes

- **Geology** (the rock type and its structure), past glaciation (ice sheets shaped much of Scotland, northern England and Wales), the climate (weathering and erosion) and human activity (farming, forestry, settlement and quarrying) all shape **landscapes**.
- The UK's **landscapes** include coastal, river and glacial **landscapes**.

Landscapes under pressure (Eduqas)

- Eduqas Geography A, Component 1, Theme 1. Visitors and changing rural economies put pressure on distinctive **landscapes** such as National Parks.

- **Honeypot sites** attract large numbers of visitors, causing footpath erosion, litter, traffic and parking problems, but bringing money and jobs. **Carrying capacity** is the most visitors a place can take before it is damaged.
- Management includes repairing and surfacing footpaths, car parks and park-and-ride, signs that spread visitors out, and education.

Drainage basins (Eduqas)

- Rain is stored and moves through a drainage basin. Interception: plants catch rain. Infiltration: water soaks into the soil. **Throughflow**: water moves sideways through the soil. Overland flow: water runs over the surface when the ground is saturated or hard.
- Climate, vegetation and **geology** affect how quickly rain reaches the river and its discharge through the year. Changing land use, such as building on fields, increases flooding risk.
- Flood management mixes hard engineering (dams, embankments, flood walls), soft engineering (planting trees, restoring floodplains) and **land use zoning** (keeping building off the areas most at risk). Building new homes on floodplains is a source of conflict.

Key terms

Upland	High land, usually over about 600 m, such as mountains and moorland.
Lowland	Low, flatter land, often used for farming and towns.
Relief	The height and shape of the land.
Geology	The rocks that make up an area.
Igneous rock	Rock formed from cooled magma or lava, such as granite.
Sedimentary rock	Rock formed from layers of sediment, such as chalk and clay.
Metamorphic rock	Rock changed by heat and pressure, such as slate.
Landscape	The visible features of an area of land.
Honeypot site	A place that attracts large numbers of visitors. (Eduqas)
Carrying capacity	The largest number of visitors a place can take before it is damaged. (Eduqas)
Throughflow	Water moving sideways through the soil towards a river. (Eduqas)
Land use zoning	Planning where building is allowed, keeping it off the areas most at risk of flooding. (Eduqas)

Quick questions

Cover the answers and test yourself: remembering is what makes it stick.

Your notes

1. Where are most of the UK's upland areas?
2. Which rocks form most of the UK's uplands?
3. What is the UK's highest mountain?
4. What is the UK's longest river?
5. Which of these is a lowland area?
6. Why do uplands stand higher than lowlands?
7. What is relief?
8. Which type of rock is chalk?

Answers

1. In the north and west
2. Hard, older igneous and metamorphic rocks
3. Ben Nevis
4. The River Severn
5. East Anglia
6. Their harder rocks resist erosion
7. The height and shape of the land
8. Sedimentary

What to do next

Practise 15 questions on this topic

Try 5 exam questions, with mark schemes

Read the lesson, one step at a time

Free revision for GCSE and KS3 at lycolearn.co.uk. Some notes are for one exam board only, and say so in brackets.

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