

## Activity 1: What can a geographer do?

- A. There are some careers that use specific geographical skills (e.g. GIS) and/or geographical knowledge (e.g. coastal management, urban planning, renewable energy). A geography degree is ideal for students who want to work in these areas.
- B. There are some careers that use a range of employable skills (e.g. team working, data analysis, communication, self-motivation) that are developed during a geography degree. This makes a geography degree a great choice for students who have not decided on their career yet and want to keep their options open.
- C. There are some careers that a geography degree would not be suitable for – those that need specialist training unrelated to a geography degree (e.g. doctor, chemist, plumber).

Go through the list of different jobs below and decide which of the three types of career they fall into, labelling them either A, B, or C.

Cartographer	Nurse	Television presenter
Commercial surveyor	Auditor	Car salesperson
Make-up artist	Investment banker	Librarian
Hotel manager	Water supply manager	Retail manager
Environmental consultant	Insurance broker	Aerospace engineer
GIS technician	Tax adviser	Electrician
Midwife	IT consultant	Computer game developer
Geography teacher	Logistics/distribution manager	Lawyer
International aid worker	Management consultant	Market researcher
Landscape architect	Sustainability consultant	Architect
Market researcher	Recruitment consultant	Prime minister
Nature conservation officer	Actuary	Marketing executive
Tourism officer	Statistician	Human resource manager
Transport planner	Personal Assistant	Dancer
Police officer	Meteorologist	Fashion designer
Accountant	Chef	Illustrator
Social worker	Primary school teacher	Photographer
Farmer	Soil scientist	Financial adviser
Plumber	Charity campaign manager	Builder
Marine biologist	Doctor	Web designer
Recycling officer	Charity volunteer coordinator	Airline pilot
Vet	Youth worker	Mining engineer
Estate agent	Town planner	Water quality scientist
Microbiologist	Air quality scientist	Psychologist
Television camera operator	Animator	Hospital manager
Flood risk manager	Physiotherapist	Restaurant manager
Computer game developer	Sales executive	Civil engineer
Call centre manager	Travel agency manager	Journalist

## Activity 1: What can a geographer do?

The correct answers are given below.

How many did you get right?

Are there any that surprise you?

Cartographer – A	Nurse - C	Television presenter - B
Commercial surveyor - C	Auditor - B	Car salesperson - B
Make-up artist - C	Investment banker - B	Librarian - B
Hotel manager - B	Water supply manager - A	Retail manager - B
Environmental consultant - A	Insurance broker - B	Aerospace engineer - C
GIS technician - A	Tax adviser - B	Electrician - C
Midwife - C	IT consultant - C	Computer game developer - C
Geography teacher - A	Logistics/distribution manager - B	Lawyer - B
International aid worker - A	Management consultant - B	Market researcher - B
Landscape architect - B	Sustainability consultant - A	Architect - C
Market researcher - B	Recruitment consultant - B	Prime minister - B
Nature conservation officer - A	Actuary - B	Marketing executive - B
Tourism officer - B	Statistician - B	Human resource manager - B
Transport planner - A	Personal Assistant - B	Dancer - C
Police officer - B	Meteorologist - A	Fashion designer - C
Accountant - B	Chef - C	Illustrator - C
Social worker - B	Primary school teacher - B	Photographer - C
Farmer - B	Soil scientist - A	Financial adviser - B
Plumber - C	Charity campaign manager - B	Builder - C
Marine biologist - A	Doctor - C	Web designer - C
Recycling officer - A	Charity volunteer coordinator - B	Airline pilot - B
Vet - C	Youth worker - B	Mining engineer - C
Estate agent - B	Town planner - A	Water quality scientist - A
Microbiologist - C	Air quality scientist - A	Psychologist - C
Television camera operator - C	Animator - C	Hospital manager - B
Flood risk manager – A	Physiotherapist - C	Restaurant manager - B
Computer game developer - C	Sales executive - B	Civil engineer – C
Call centre manager - B	Travel agency manager - B	Journalist - B

## Activity 2: Getting to know some professional geographers

Read the professional geographer profiles (provided by the Royal Geographical Society) to answer the following questions:

1. What are the different ways that their geography degrees have helped their careers?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Which of the careers do you like the sound of best and why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What do you think are the three most useful pieces of advice given by the professional geographers?

# Careers in Geography

## Katherine Holdstock

Audit Associate, Insurance  
Department, EY



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Throughout school I decided to study the subjects I enjoyed the most, taking geography, history, law

and maths for A Level. I really enjoyed geography at this level and this prompted my application for a BA in Geography at university. I loved my degree and studied a good mixture of physical and human modules, including furthering my knowledge of hazards and risks, and also exploring new topics such as health geographies. After university I went to work at Walt Disney World Resort in Florida as part of their cultural representative programme. This was an amazing experience, where I got to live and work with people from across the world. Once I returned home I decided to apply for graduate schemes and had been attracted to accounting and finance positions, which is what led me to EY, previously known as Ernst & Young.

### *What does your role entail?*

As an auditor I work on statutory audits, a requirement of most UK companies. This involves being out at the client's offices or factory, requesting information and gaining an understanding of the business and their financial statements, preparing a report as to whether the business's accounts show a 'true and fair' view of their financial position. I'm in the insurance department which is risk-based. A geographer is ideally suited to work in this department as their knowledge of processes and contexts allow a unique insight. My role offers me the opportunity to study the ICAS (Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland) qualification which means that after I complete it I will gain a lot of options both in and out of my current firm.

### *Advice to someone thinking of taking geography further*

Many people think that to work in business and finance you need to have a related degree. This is a myth. Most companies will employ people from a whole range of backgrounds and then train them up into a particular role. It's the soft skills that companies are looking for, and that's why geography can give you the edge. Within the subject, especially at university, you will develop team working skills, learn how to interview, use statistics and be able to write and report coherently and concisely

### *Other geographers working in this sector include:*

Chairman, Dotted Eyes Ltd; **Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability Manager, Camelot**; National Accounts Manager, Danone; **Resource Manager, Personal Finance Education Group**; Sales Manager, Jutexpo Ltd; **Senior Associate, PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC)**; Strategic Relations Manager, Shell International.

95% of final year students on BSc Geography at UWE Bristol feel prepared for their future career (NSS 2018). For more information:

- BSc Geography - <https://courses.uwe.ac.uk/FF89>
- BA Geography - <https://courses.uwe.ac.uk/L700>

# Careers in Geography

## Anup Patel

Programme Manager for Europe,  
Middle East, Africa and Russia, CBRE



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I studied BSc Geography with Economics at university, and then to further enhance my skills studied a Master's in Project and Enterprise.

My specific area of interest in geography has always been urban economics, how cities develop/decline and the role economics theory plays in this. Prior to my current job I worked for Mace, an international construction and consultancy company working on the London Olympic Games and primary school expansion projects.

### *What does your role entail?*

CBRE are a global real estate services adviser and I work for a global technology client who occupies office space around the world. As their business changes, their office needs change. Once they know they need to vacate, expand or acquire a new office, we get involved to manage the process for them. A typical day for me involves travelling the world from my base in London. I have regular calls with project teams in Rome, Madrid, Dubai, Paris, and Riyadh to name a few.

### *How does geography help you in your everyday work?*

Working across countries, with people from all over the world presents many challenges, ranging from scheduling meetings in different time zones and being mindful of national/religious holidays, to more complex legal and tax issues, and having an understanding of the world certainly helps. It has allowed me to be empathetic to the different cultures I'm working with and allows me to be strategic when looking at the global needs of clients and how we compliment them.

### *Advice to someone thinking of taking geography further*

There are many geographers in the built environment industry (construction and real estate) and many have jobs similar to mine in project management or surveying. Many firms take geographers on and train them in-house, or even pay for you to complete a further Master's degree. We can analyse information and provide reasoned conclusions and solutions when required, and can work in all parts of a team effectively. Being a good project manager is a rarity and geographers are some of the best.

### *Other geographers working in this sector include*

Assistant Planner, Turley; **Chartered Surveyor, Ministry of Defence**; Graduate Land Surveyor, Kemp Chartered Land and Engineering Surveyors; **Property Manager, Foxtons**; Regeneration Research Assistant, Aspire Housing Group; **Senior Transport Consultant, Mouchel Sustainability**; Analyst, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

BSc Geography at UWE Bristol achieved 100% overall satisfaction in the 2018 National Student Survey. For more information:

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# Careers in Geography

## Rebecca Shewry

Weather Producer, Sky News



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I really enjoyed studying geography at school and my teachers encouraged me to continue through A Level to university. I had a particular interest and flair for weather, geomorphology

and glaciology and so studied a BSc Physical Geography course at university. Throughout my course I developed a real love for all things weather and climate and this led me to do a Master's in Applied Meteorology and Climatology. I was very fortunate to get my first job in weather at the Met Office where I worked as a Meteorologist for seven years producing weather forecasts for a variety of customers. From here I moved to my current role as a Weather Producer for Sky News.

### *What does your role entail?*

My job requires me to analyse weather data from all over the world and produce forecasts that can be broadcast on Sky television. I take complex weather information and make it accessible, so that the viewing public know how the weather will affect their daily lives. This may be as simple as reminding people to take an umbrella out in times of wet weather, but it's particularly important in times of severe weather. For example, when heavy snow is forecast, I warn people of the risks, allowing them to make informed decisions as to whether journeys are completely necessary, or whether the safest option is to stay at home.

### *How does geography help you in your everyday work?*

Studying geography has given me a broad range of transferable skills, which I use every day. I use observational and analytical skills to interpret weather data on both a local and global scale. I then communicate that information to the general public ensuring it is at a suitable level for the intended audience.

### *Advice to someone thinking of taking geography further*

Geography will give you a fantastic understanding of the world around you. It also provides a wide range of transferable skills, such as team-working and problem-solving, which will make you very desirable to a future employer.

### *Others in this sector include*

Air Pollution Specialist, Local Authority; **Australia Oil and Gas Team Manager, Deloitte**; Catastrophe Risk Analyst, Faber; **Costal Technical Specialist, Environment Agency**; Coastal Technical Specialist, Golder Associates Ltd (UK); **Scientist, Rivers and Coastal Environments, Atkins**; Soil Mechanics Scientist, GNS Science; **Technical Specialist: Groundwater and Contaminated Land, Environment Agency**.

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# Careers in Geography

## Olly Parsons

Disaster Response Coordinator,  
Mobile for Development, Groupe  
Speciale Mobile Association (GSMA)



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Geography was always my favourite subject at school. I had a great teacher who was able to bring every topic alive in some way, and continued my interest on to study at university. During my degree, I completed internships with the Disasters Emergency Committee and led a research team to Kenya to study the potential of technology enabled community mapping on development goals. This stood me in good stead for my current job which I began in the summer of 2013.

### *What does your role entail?*

The GSMA is the global trade association for the mobile phone industry, and my role as Programme Coordinator, which sits in the Mobile for Development department, is varied and exciting. We undertake a large range of work, from working specifically with the mobile network operators to increase their resilience, to studying ways in which the mobile phone can be a channel for the delivery of aid during a disaster response, and communications used as a lifesaving tool.

### *How do you use your geographical skills?*

I work in a global industry, and our focus on disaster and crisis naturally requires me to have an understanding of these issues. At the most basic level, geography gives me an appreciation for global events, both natural and political. I also need to use skills such as report writing, presentation skills and information analysis. Communication skills are critical when it comes to working with our members and partners around the world, being aware of cultural sensitivities and working with a range of different people at different levels.

### *Advice to someone thinking of taking geography further?*

Network. Get your own work out there and show you're serious about your topic. Make yourself relevant to the area you want to work in, and at the end of the day, the most important thing is that you enjoy it.

### *Other geographers working in this sector include:*

Assistant Consultant, International Development Division at Ecorys UK; Catastrophe and Exposure Manager, Mitsui Sumitomo Insurance Group; Catastrophe Risk Analysis, Willis RE; Development and Flood Risk Technical Specialist, Environment Agency; Head of Education and Youth, Oxfam; Head of Polar Territories, Foreign and Commonwealth Office; HM Armed Forces; Social Development Advisor, Department for International Development.

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# Careers in Geography

## Alice Duff

GIS Consultant, Technical Pre-sales,  
Esri UK

Geography was my favourite subject at school. While I was at university I took a couple of GIS modules. I knew I wanted to pursue GIS so applied to do an MSc in GIS.

I always knew that I wanted to work for Esri UK and was lucky enough to get a job there after finishing my MSc.



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### *What does your role entail?*

I work in the technical pre-sales department, mainly focusing on public sector engagement and in particular government. I work within a wider group known as the 'Customer Success Group' which ensures that pre-existing customers are making the best use out of the software they have access to.

### *How does geography help you in your everyday work?*

My geographical education and technical skills have opened many doors for me. Not just my job at Esri UK, but it has also given me the opportunity to volunteer for MapAction – a non-governmental organisation which provides GIS capability in times of humanitarian emergency, and I was actually deployed to the Philippines last year to assist with the Typhoon Haiyan response.

### *Advice to someone thinking of taking geography further*

Don't be afraid to take a job you're overqualified for if you know you really want to work for a specific organisation. The first position I took at Esri was designed as a placement for students who were currently studying, but I took this position to get my foot in the door at a company I knew I wanted to work at. Having the few months as an intern allowed me to be ahead of the game when it came to the interviews for my current position. It's also important to make sure you have other activities on your CV that will separate you from the many other graduates out there.

### *Others working in this sector include*

Analyst, Defence Geographic Centre; Crime and Disorder Advisor, MAPCITE; Data Collector, Ordnance Survey; Geographic Information Analyst, Metropolitan Police; GIS Analyst, Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency; Hydrologist, WS Atkins; Hydrometry and Telemetry Officer, Environment Agency; Land Requirements Geospatial Officer, Ministry of Defence; Training and Education Services Manager, Esri UK.

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