

Chartered Geographer (Teacher) Frequently asked questions

Is Chartered Geographer (Teacher) different to Chartered Geographer?

Chartered Geographer (Teacher) is no different to Chartered Geographer- the requirements for validation and CPD requirements are the same, and they are both assessed in the same way. The Chartered Geographer (Teacher) strand of the accreditation has been introduced as part of the Action Plan for Geography (funded by the DCSF) to recognise professionalism in the teaching of geography and acknowledge that a teacher has reached a certain standard in the quality of their teaching. Chartered Geographer (Teacher) is also recognised by the TDA as being relevant to the TDA framework of professional and occupational standards for teachers. Once you have achieved Chartered Geographer (Teacher) status you are able to use either the distinction of CGeog or CGeog (Teacher).

I would like to apply to become a Chartered Geographer (Teacher) but I am not sure which route I should apply under

Applicants must demonstrate:

- Honours degree in geography (or equivalent) or B.Ed with geography.
- At least six years teaching experience (15 years if no relevant degree is held)
- Demonstrable commitment to CPD, embedding it in your practice, and supporting others.

If you have the above requirements you can apply for Chartered Geographer (Teacher) immediately. Teachers who have not yet gained enough experience to qualify for Chartered Geographer (Teacher) should contact the Professional and Communications Officer at cgeogteacher@rgs.org who will register your interest in the scheme, advise you on next steps, and allocate you a Chartered Geographer (Teacher) mentor if you so wish.

Who can apply for CGeog (Teacher)?

Applications from all teachers in all schools and organisations are welcomed, including teachers from:

- Secondary schools
- Independent schools
- International Schools
- Primary Schools
- Sixth Form and FE Colleges
- PGCE tutors
- Advisors and consultants
- Charities and organisations
- Field studies centres

What fees will I need to pay to become a Chartered Geographer (Teacher)?

If you are not already a fellow of the RGS-IBG you will become one at the time of your application. Annual Fellowship of the Society currently costs £87 (2010 price). If you are already a Fellow of the RGS-IBG you need only supply the £50 fee to cover your application.

You will need to pay a non-refundable application fee when submitting your forms for Chartered Geographer (Teacher) status. This is currently £50 and covers administration costs. Once you have become a Chartered Geographer (Teacher) you will be asked to pay an annual administration fee of £20 to maintain the accreditation. This fee will be automatically added to your annual Fellowship subscription invoice.

Once accredited, the overall cost of maintaining your Chartered Geographer (Teacher) status is £107 per year- around £2 per week. This will include your annual Fellowship of the Society.

The cost of Chartered Geographer (Teacher) is tax deductible as a professional expense.

Do I get any discounts if my school or college is a Schools Member of the Society?

If your school is a current Schools Member of the Society and all membership fees are up to date we will waive the £50 application fee for any members of your department who wish to apply for CGeog (Teacher). However these candidates will still need to become Fellows of the Society if they are not already.

Do I get any discounts if I am a Geographical Association individual member?

As part of the Society's reciprocal arrangement with the GA, GA individual members can now apply for Fellowship of the Society at the reduced rate of £40 p.a. For more details please go to <http://www.geographyteachingtoday.org.uk/about-the-apg/reciprocal-membership/>

What are the benefits of becoming a Chartered Geographer (Teacher)? I need to convince my Senior Management that it is a worthwhile accreditation to work towards.

Chartered Geographer (Teacher) is the only ongoing professional accreditation linked to CPD in Geography, and proves your commitment to your own professional development. Encouraging you to think about how your activities in and out of school affect the teaching and learning of geography means your focus will be on how to get more involved in the geography community.

Some of the benefits of Chartered Geographer (Teacher) include:

- Professional Development: Chartered Geographer (Teacher) is relevant to the TDA framework of professional and occupational standards for teachers. CGeog (Teacher) will provide an accredited award relevant to your professional and career development.
- Career Progression: It can support your application for a leadership or Advanced Teacher role.
- Demonstrates that you wish to maintain your professional standards through continually developing your geographical skills and knowledge.
- Shows that you are committed to geography beyond your specific teaching responsibilities, by recognising your ongoing contribution to teaching and learning and the wider discipline.
- Proves your commitment to the professionalism of the discipline by using CGeog (Teacher) after your name.
- As a Chartered Geographer (Teacher) you will be selecting and undertaking your own annual programme of CPD and demonstrating how this has been embedded and reflected on in your work.
- Uses a wide range of CPD activities as evidence, including those that you currently undertake such as working with examination boards
- You can, if you wish, become a mentor for teachers thinking of becoming a Chartered Geographer (Teacher) in the future.

"Continued professional development is essential to practising geography teachers to keep up-to-date with changes to the curriculum and teaching and learning methodology. Therefore the regular delivery to and attendance of conferences and meetings, as is required for the annual continuation of the Chartered Geography (Teacher) status, has greatly benefited myself, members of the department and my students." Garry Atterton Chartered Geographer, The Castle School, South Gloucestershire

Do I have to become a Fellow of the RGS-IBG before I can submit my application for Chartered Geographer (Teacher) status?

You will need to be a Fellow of the RGS-IBG before your application for Chartered Geographer (Teacher) can be processed. If you are not currently a Fellow of the RGS-IBG you can apply for Fellowship at the same time as applying for Chartered Geographer (Teacher). This will cost you an additional £87.

When can I submit my application to become a Chartered Geographer (Teacher)?

You can submit your application for Chartered Geographer (Teacher) at any time during the year. Final approval is given at one of 4 Council meetings throughout the year and we anticipate applications take around 12 weeks to process.

What qualifications do I need to have in order to be eligible?

Chartered Geographer (Teacher) is open to both graduates and non-graduates. Graduates require a minimum of 6 years teaching experience upon application; non graduates require at least 15 years relevant teaching experience. For graduates your degree must consist of at least 60% geographical content. For advice on this matter please email cgeogteacher@rqs.org with full details of your degree content.

I have a Masters or PhD. Does that count towards my evidence?

Yes. Any relevant experience you have following graduation from your first degree can be used as evidence towards the criteria needed for Chartered Geographer (Teacher). However, you must still present at least 6 full years of geography teaching, not including your training year.

I have a degree but it is not in geography or a related discipline. What experience do I need to be eligible for chartered Geographer (Teacher)?

You will be eligible for Chartered Geographer (Teacher) as long as you have completed 15 years relevant teaching experience. If you do not currently have 15 years teaching experience you can still register your interest in the accreditation, and be assigned a mentor to help you work towards the evidence and experience needed to apply.

Does my PGCE / GTP year count towards the six years needed?

Your training year does not count towards the 6 years minimum needed to apply for CGeog (Teacher). This is because candidates must have achieved QTS and then taught for 6 years.

What should be included in my Professional Self Evaluation Report?

The Professional Self Evaluation Report is more than just an extended CV. It should contain thoughts, opinions and detailed analysis of how your work has contributed to the teaching and learning of geography. The Assessors will be looking for a clear demonstration that you are making a significant contribution to the teaching of geography in your school, and also to geography in the wider community. You must refer to the criteria when planning your Report, as the Assessors will be using this document to assess your suitability for Chartered Geographer (Teacher) status. Assessors will also be looking for a statement about why you are applying for Chartered Geographer (Teacher) status, and what you plan to do once accredited.

What needs to be included in my extended CV? For example, do I need to specify projects I've worked on, or should I put that into my Professional Self Evaluation Report?

Your extended CV should be a detailed report of your education and work experience to date, with slightly more detail than you would provide for a job application. The extended CV should contain details of projects you have worked on, although you should be using the Professional Self Evaluation Report to explain these projects in further detail and mention how your work has contributed to the advancement of the teaching and learning of geography.

What could be included as supporting documents?

Anything that can clearly illustrate what you have claimed or described in your Professional Self Evaluation Report. This could include copies of articles or papers you have written, resources you have produced as part of a project, evidence of your work on a website etc. Photocopies of certificates will be accepted as evidence- there is no need to send the original document. Please do not send through examples of work your students have done, schemes of work or departmental handbooks. Please note that you do not have to submit supporting documents with your application.

How much paperwork is involved?

When you apply for Chartered Geographer (Teacher) your initial paperwork will be your application form, an extended CV and a 1000 word Professional Self Evaluation Report. Supporting documents may include a CPD record and any resources/articles etc you have had published. As many of these items are documents you will be keeping as a record of your career development, the application paperwork should not take you long to complete.

Can someone read through my application and offer feedback before I submit it officially?

Yes we are happy to read through your documents and offer feedback before you present the application and payment. Please email your documents to cgeogteacher@rgs.org

I am aware that I have to provide two referees, one of whom must be a Fellow of the RGS-IBG. I don't know any existing Fellows- what should I do?

Your referees should both know you in a professional capacity and be able to comment on your work and suitability for the accreditation. If neither is a Fellow of the RGS-IBG please do not worry, just include full details so we can contact your professional referees.

Who can act as a suitable referee?

Your referees must be someone who can comment upon the claims you make in your Personal Self Evaluation Report. They are likely to be your Head of Department, Deputy Head, Head Teacher, previous Senior Managers, Masters or PhD Supervisor, Project Leaders within Subject Associations and other organisations etc.

How long will my application take?

We will endeavour to process your application within 12 weeks. 'Soft' deadlines will be set throughout the year so that you are aware of the dates your application needs to be received by in order for it to be approved during the next Council meeting. You will be notified of your status as soon as your application has been seen by Council.

What happens if I do not achieve Chartered Geographer (Teacher) status this time?

If the assessors decide you are not suitable to be granted Chartered Geographer (Teacher) status your application will be rejected. Feedback will be provided as to why this has occurred. There is an appeals procedure for rejected candidates, please see the 'Appeals and disciplinary procedures' document.

If the assessors feel that your application is strong but you have provided insufficient evidence or experience in several areas, your application will be put on hold. You will be notified of the areas in which more evidence should be provided, and once this has been collected your application will be sent to the assessors again. You will not have to reapply for Chartered Geographer (Teacher) once your application has been put on hold.

What are the timescales involved to acquire the necessary continual professional development?

Once Chartered Geographer (Teacher) status has been awarded, the RGS-IBG stipulates that an annual log of CPD should be submitted for inspection in order to maintain Chartered Geographer (Teacher) status. The minimum amount of CPD you must complete is 35 hours per year, of which 20 should be internal CPD and 15 external CPD. Details of CPD available and also a logging matrix can be found at www.rgs.org/cgeogteacher. CPD hours are awarded via a points scale, on which 1 point to equal to 1 hour of CPD.

How will CPD be monitored?

At the end of each year we will email you to ask you to provide us with details of your annual CPD involvement. This should be provided on the CPD matrix available to download from www.rgs.org/cgeogteacher. We will select a random sample of CPD records, and contact the providers involved to ensure the teachers attended the events / gave sufficient input to warrant CPD points.

I would like to mentor potential Chartered Geographer (Teacher) candidates once I achieve the status myself- what should I do?

If you are interested in mentoring potential Chartered Geographer (Teacher) candidates once you have been awarded the status, please let us know. You will then be put in contact with one or two potential candidates (if possible in your local area) in order for you to provide support, guidance and ideas (either by email, phone or face to face). You will be awarded CPD points (number of points to be confirmed) if you choose to become a mentor.

How will mentoring help develop my career?

Becoming a mentor has a variety of benefits, including:

- To assist other teachers in gaining the necessary experience and knowledge to fulfil the criteria for Chartered Geographer (Teacher)
- Demonstrates your commitment to advancing your own professional development and the professional development of others
- Sharing best practice and geographical skills and knowledge
- Creates CPD networks within local regions and between schools
- Provides evidence towards your 35 hour Chartered Geographer (Teacher) annual CPD quota.

When can I use my CGeog (Teacher) distinction?

Once your application has been approved by Council you will be notified straight away. You are not permitted to use CGeog (Teacher) after your name until you have received this notification.

Can I use the distinction CGeog instead of CGeog (Teacher)?

Once you have achieved Chartered Status you are able to use either the CGeog (Teacher) or CGeog distinction. There is no difference between the two in terms of requirements and assessment.