

Schools Geology Challenge 2026:

Rules for participating schools

1. The Competition

The Schools Geology Challenge is a competition organised by The Geological Society of London, for students who are currently studying Geology, Geography or science subject A Levels, Advanced Highers or Leaving Certificate.

The competition runs in 2 stages:

- The Qualifiers
- The Final

In order to be considered for the Final, students must enter the Qualifiers. **The closing date for entries is 30 January 2026.** Further details can be found in Section 4a.

Entries to the Qualifier are assessed by a panel of judges. The top 10 scoring entrants are invited to take part in the Final.

The Final will be an in-person event and will take place **19 March 2026**. Teams who attend the Final are invited to claim reimbursement of up to £100 per person, for up to six students and one accompanying adult (£700 total).

2. The Prize

The winning team of the Schools Geology Challenge will receive:

- An engraved trophy
- A certificate
- £500 to support the furtherance of geoscience education in their school
- A year's student membership to the Geological Society

The team which places as runner up will receive:

- A certificate
- £200 to support the furtherance of geoscience education in their school

All finalists will receive a certificate of participation.

Cash prizes must be used to further geoscience teaching within the winning teams' school. Details on how to claim cash prizes will be given to the winners after the competition Final.

3. Entry requirements

- Students should be studying A Levels (England, Wales and Northern Ireland), Highers/Advanced Highers (Scotland), Leaving Certificate (Ireland).
- Students should enter the competition in teams of 2-6 people.
- Schools can enter more than one team, providing that there no more than 6 pupils in each team.
- Students must submit an entry to the Qualifiers in order to be considered for progression to the Final.
- Entries to the Qualifiers should be submitted by **30 January 2026**. Teams who progress to the Final will be notified by **16 February 2026**.

4. Stages of the competition

a. The Qualifiers

In order to enter the Challenge, students should present a geoscience topic of their choosing which fits the **brief** in section 5.

Entries should be created in a digital format, suitable for uploading online. Full details are in the **brief**.

Entries must be submitted via the GSL website: <https://www.geolsoc.org.uk/geochallenge>

Entries must be submitted by midnight on 30 January 2026

Submissions to the qualifiers must meet the following criteria:

- The work should be suitable for a non-expert audience aged 16-24.
- If using video (including filmed presentations) the total running time must not exceed 3 minutes (either for one video, or the combined time of multiple videos).
- Submissions must be fully credited; when submitting entries, all team members must be named.
- References **MUST** be used when appropriate, either in video descriptions, captions, poster footnotes or similar*

*If content is created as though for social media, but submitted privately, please note how the piece would be referenced when submitting.

b. The Final

The final will be held on 19 March 2026

The final will be an in-person event. Teams who attend in person at Burlington House will be reimbursed up to £1000 for travel and accommodation if required.

Teams who have made it to the finals will be contacted no later than 16 February 2026.

Teams who reach the Final will take part in a problem-solving activity. Details of the activity will be explained at the Final.

The Final will be judged by a panel of geoscience professionals.

The judges will choose one winning team and one team as runner-up.

5. Qualifiers: Brief for submissions.

The brief can be found here. The text-only version is below.

To enter the Schools Geology Challenge, you must make a submission to the Qualifiers by no later than **30 January 2026**.

For the Qualifiers, we would like you to:

1. Choose a geoscience topic.
2. Present that topic for an online audience.
3. Submit your entry via the website at: www.geolsoc.org.uk/geochallenge

1. Your topic can be anything you like. It could be tied in with your school curriculum or inspired by your own experience; it could be a case study, a concept, or phenomenon; as long as it's geoscience, we want to hear about it!

2. Be creative in presenting the topic: you could create a presentation and film yourselves delivering it in class, or over zoom, or even turn it into a newsroom-style clip. You could document a coursework experiment via vlog, Instagram or TikTok* – or turn it into a mini documentary!

Presenting a topic doesn't have to involve speaking; you could use visuals to communicate your topic, such as an infographic like our carbon posters, or a cartoon strip.

* Submissions can be designed for social media but uploaded privately or sent separately for privacy reasons.

3. Your submissions **MUST** fit the following criteria:

- Your work should be suitable for a non-expert audience aged 16-24.
- If you are using video (including filmed presentations) the total running time must not exceed 3 minutes (either for one video, or the combined time of multiple videos).
- Submissions must be fully credited; when submitting your entry please name everyone in your team who was involved.
- You **MUST** use references where appropriate, either in video descriptions, captions, poster footnotes or similar*
*If you are creating content for social media but submitting privately, please note your references and where you would place them when submitting.

You will be marked on:

- The scientific content and accuracy of your work (50%)
- How well you communicate your topic for the specified audience (25%)
- Your creativity (25%)

Good luck!