

## INTRODUCTION TO GEOGRAPHICAL RESEARCH

Autumn and Winter Term | 2025-26

### GY140- ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE FOR AT & WT WEEKS 1-5

#### ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

GY140 consists of both formative and summative assignments. Formative assignments are optional (though strongly recommended for you to complete) and are intended to help you in working towards your summative assignments. The summative components are required and contribute to the final grade for the course.

Below is detailed guidance on each of the assessments associated with the course, along with a timeline to help guide you through the tasks required.

#### FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT 1



1. [Group Presentation – Summarising the Approach, Methods, and Design of an Academic Paper](#)

**WHEN:** Autumn Term, Weeks 5-11, in classes (5-7mins max)

You will be asked to produce a short **5-7-minute class presentation in groups**. You can enrol to a presentation (details on how to do so are below) for any of the classes from week 5-11.

Following your presentation, there will be a class discussion, and some verbal feedback will be given by the class teacher to deepen your understanding of the papers you read.

These classes will follow lectures by different departmental faculty, so it will be an opportunity to get to know the work of your professors, and to think about the methods and design behind a research output.

The presentations will help you dive deeper into the GY140's key readings – to understand what geographical research is, and to think collectively about the methods and research design behind the final output (i.e., the academic paper). It will also give you the opportunity to work on your presentation and collaboration skills. **The presentations are mandatory (but not graded) and will help you build towards your first two summative assessments!**

## Presentation Content and Guidance

- The presentation should be a summary of one key reading of the corresponding week. If there are two or three key readings that week, you are free to pick one as a group.
- There are five questions to guide you in creating your presentation – but you can include other things that you find relevant and interesting, e.g., comparisons of this paper to others, reflections on the lecture by the author of the paper, etc. The questions are:
  - i. What research question (or questions) is the paper answering?
  - ii. What research method(s) was(were) used?
  - iii. What are the paper's main findings/arguments/conclusions?
  - iv. Why do you think the researcher chose the particular method?
  - v. What did you find especially interesting about their paper? Why? What makes this paper geographic?
- It is up to the students whether they want to use slides, PowerPoint, Prezi, or any other computer programmes to deliver the presentation. Photos, videos, etc. can be used.
- Any academic papers, blogs, newspaper articles, photos, videos, etc. used in the presentations should be cited properly in reference styles of the students' choice, e.g. APA, MLA, Chicago, Harvard, etc. This will help you to become familiar with the practice early on!!
- You will sign up for a presentation slot on Moodle towards the end of week 3, it will be done on a first-come first-served basis – we will discuss this further in lectures and classes but please look out for the Moodle announcement about this!

## FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT 2



### 2. Draft Research Design Proposal

WHEN: 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2026, by 12pm - 1 A4 page (max), individual submission to Moodle.

You will be working towards your second summative assessment submission over the first five weeks of the Winter Term. In order to get some feedback on your research design proposal before submission, you have the opportunity to submit a 1-page draft proposal. This should include:

1. Your proposed research question(s) and project aims (no more than 2 sentences)
2. A short statement explaining why you think this is an important project (i.e., a project rationale)

(again, no more than 2-3 sentences or bullet points).

3. An indication of the literature you will cite in your proposal, or the theory your project will speak to (this can be a list of key references, or an indication of the kinds of literature – e.g. “My literature review will outline geographic research on space, place, and gender, such as ...”)
4. A snapshot of the methods your proposal will include and an explanation of why these are the most appropriate (again, no more than 2-3 sentences).

*\* Top Tip: If creating this draft sparks any concerns/questions, please then bring these to the lectures, classes, or the office hours of the GY140 team so we can address them ahead of the summative submission!*

## SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT 1

There are three summative assessments associated with this course. These are all mandatory and count towards your final grade for the course. This document provides guidance for the first two of these!



1. **Group Presentation: 25% of the course grade**  
**WHEN: WT Week 1 Classes – 5-7 minute presentations, followed by 5 minutes q&a, max 7 slides).**

**\* Group Mark: Each group receives a single group mark for their work. All group members receive the group mark, except in cases of serious absence or non-participation.**

**\*\* All group members are equal, and every team member's opinion and contribution to the project should be thoughtfully and respectfully considered. Treat each other with mutual respect, and ensure that everyone has opportunities to contribute. Harassment, bullying, threatening or intimidating behaviour will not be tolerated.**

This project is designed to assess your understanding of what geographic research is, and to demonstrate your (collective) understanding of method, data, research findings, and geographic thought.

### Guidance for the Group Presentation

- **You will be assigned a group in AT Week 7.** You will need to choose a geographic journal article in your group to present on. This can be any geographic article, but it cannot be one that is on the GY140 reading list. **Your article selection needs to be approved by your class teacher by the end of the AT.**
- Like your formative presentations, your group summative presentation should be guided by the following questions:
  - i. What research question (or questions) is the paper answering?
  - ii. What research method(s) was(were) used?
  - iii. What are the paper's main findings/arguments/conclusions?
  - iv. Why do you think the researcher chose the particular method?
  - v. What did you find especially interesting about their paper? Why? What makes this paper

geographic?

- In addition to the above, your presentation should have a title page where you introduce what article you are presenting on, who the author(s) is, and which journal you got this from. You also need to ensure that you have a reference list on your final slide.
- You do not all have to speak in your presentation for equal times, but everyone is expected to participate. If you are not a 'presenter', you will have to contribute in the q&a.
- Your slides **must be uploaded to the Moodle page by 12pm on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2026**. It is the responsibility of every group to ensure at least one student has submitted these, and the first slide should include the names of all group members. Please do not include your candidate numbers.
- If you are unable to attend the presentation on the day – due to illness, or other instances – you will need to provide evidence of your reason for missing the assessment, as with other submissions. You should also notify your group. We will then inform you of an alternative time to complete the assessment.
- Your proposal will be assessed in relation to the department's criteria for undergraduate summative presentations (available on the Moodle page).

## SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT 2



### 2. RESEARCH PROPOSAL: 25% of the course grade WHEN: 16<sup>th</sup> March 2026, by 12pm (1,500 words max, individual submission)

This project is designed to assess your understanding of the course material from the AT and the first 5 weeks of the WT. It particularly assesses your understanding of how research is designed, what methods are appropriate to use with different research questions, and how theory and methods are related.

In addition, successfully completing this project will prepare you to conduct further independent research during the field trip in year 2 and for your dissertation in year 3.

#### Guidance for the Research Proposal

- You are being tasked with creating a research proposal for a qualitative research project on the topic of privately owned public spaces in London.
- Your class teacher will organize activities in the first half of Winter Term that will introduce you to this exercise and prepare you to execute it. During these weeks, you will create a basic research design,

which will include a feasible research question and an appropriate set of research methods that can be carried out in a chosen research site.

You will select one of the following sites or you may decide to compare more than one:

- i. Docklands/Canary Wharf
- ii. Granary Square
- iii. Inner Temple
- iv. Bishops Square/Spitalfields
- v. Sky Garden at 20 Fenchurch Street

*Top tip: You should do some research on these sites in advance and see what geographers or other urban scholars have already done! While your proposal should try to identify a question that hasn't yet been answered, it can certainly build from existing research!!*

- During Week 5 of the Winter Term there is no lecture in order to give you additional time to work on your project. Instead, the session will be used to help you workshop your ideas.
- You are submitting this individually, but peer support is encouraged. You may also seek guidance from your class teacher or lecturer during their office hours.
- After completing the in-class exercises and doing your own independent preparation, you will write a research proposal (1,500 words – see guidance on Moodle for what does and does not count in the word count). Your proposal will be assessed in relation to the department's standard criteria for undergraduate summative assessments (available on the Moodle page).
- **All research proposals should contain the following components:**
  - i. Project title and aims
  - ii. Research question and project rationale: you should outline the question you have decided to answer and also explain why you settled on this question (you can detail if you changed your question at any point, and if so, why) – this is where you can justify why your proposed research matters!
  - iii. Literature Review: your project should be situated in dialogue with existing academic literature on the topic.
  - iv. Methodology: what methods are you proposing to use and why? Why were they suitable for your research question? What would they enable you to understand? What might they prevent you from finding out? You should also outline any ethical concerns you have for your project.

The following optional components could enhance your final submission:

- You may want to make explicit connections to the discussions of theory, method, and geographical research from the AT.
- You are also welcome to include visual aids, such as photographs, drawings, maps, or anything else that helps illustrate how you propose to go about conducting the research.

## SUGGESTED TIMELINE FOR GY140 ASSESSMENT COMPLETION.

Below is a set of tables which provides instructions for completing your first few assessments for GY140. These are suggestions but should help with ensuring you are doing things with enough time (in order to try to avoid the last minute rush) and to get things done as well as you can!

Please do not panic if you get a little behind, but this may help you to see where you might need to catch up a little! If you see yourself slipping behind, please come and see us in our office hours (one of the class teachers or one of the key lecturers, depending on where in the academic year we are!) so that we can help before things become more challenging!

To note, **you should also try to keep up with the course reading!** Please try to read at least the key readings ahead of your classes each week – this will enable you to participate fully in classes and get the most out of them! It will also help you build towards your summative assessments!!

### AUTUMN TERM

Week	TEACHING TIMETABLE (LECTURES AND CLASSES)	ASSESSMENT-RELATED INSTRUCTION
Week 1	Introduction to Geographical Research NO CLASS	Read over the Course Outline and Assessment Guidance – make your own reading schedule and add deadlines to your personal calendars!
Week 2	Theory and Method in Geographic Research Class on Intro to Geographical Research	Take a look over the profiles of the faculty who are presenting from week 4 to week 11 and think about whose work you would like to read more deeply and present on!
Week 3	The Ethics and Politics of Research Class on Theory and Method	Sign up for class presentations ( <b>FORMATIVE 1</b> ). Once you have details of who is in your group and know which paper you will be presenting on, ensure you read the paper, making notes, and then arrange a date to meet and get your presentation made! I would aim to do this at least 3-5 days before the class you will present in so you can practice what you are saying if you are nervous! Unless you are presenting in week 4 or 5, why not read ahead and prepare with your group in Reading Week!
Week 4	Geographical Research in the Flesh: Dr Richard Perkins Class on The Ethics and Politics of Research	During others presentations, take notes to help you prepare for your own!
Week 5	Geographical Research in the Flesh: Professor Hyun Bang Shin Class: Dr Perkins's work	
Week 6	<i>Reading Week</i>	
Week 7	Geographical Research in the Flesh: Dr Ryan Centner Class: Prof Shin's work	

Week 8	<b>Geographical Research in the Flesh: Professor Henry Overman</b> Class: Dr Centner's work	
Week 9	<b>Geographical Research in the Flesh: Professor Gareth Jones</b> Class: Prof Overman's work	Start to think about your summative presentation, make a plan for how to get this complete before term ends. Are you going to meet (online or in person) in the Winter Break? Are you going to allocate one slide per person, do you need to set some guidelines?
Week 10	<b>Geographical Research in the Flesh: Professor Claire Mercer</b> Class: Prof Jones' work	
Week 11	<b>AT Summary</b> Class: Prof Mercer's work	Leave this week with a POA for completing your summative presentation! Make sure you have checked your article selection for your group presentation with your class teacher!
Winter Break		<b>Make sure you take a break!!</b>

## WINTER TERM

Week 1	<b>Designing Geographic Research</b> Class: Presentations	<b>SUMMATIVE 1: Summative Presentations in classes!</b>
Week 2	<b>Fieldwork for Geographers</b> Class on designing Geographic Research and starting to build towards Summative 2	From this week on, every class will not only discuss the lecture material but will involve an activity that will lead you towards your Summative Research Proposal. Make sure you have read the guidance! If you miss a class, be sure to catch up on the missed activity so you don't get behind.
Week 3	<b>Alternative Data Gathering Techniques</b> Class on Fieldwork for Geographers and building towards Summative 1)	Work on a 1 page draft of your research design proposal, using the instructions above.
Week 4	<b>Analysis, Generalisation and Communication</b> Class on Alternative Data Gathering Techniques and building towards Summative 1)	<b>FORMATIVE 2 DUE: Submit to Moodle by 12pm, 2<sup>nd</sup> February</b>
Week 5	<b>Summative Workshop</b> Class on Analysis, Generalisation and Communication and building towards Summative 1)	We will spend this session workshoping your research proposal. Come with the questions you have about the remaining steps you have to complete the assignment to the workshop!
Week 6	<i>Reading Week</i>	<p>Set aside 2-3 days to complete your assignment (summative 2). You should already have a lot of the information needed to complete this!</p> <p>Leave at least a day or two before you then re-read the complete version. Have someone else read it through too if you can (even if this is just for understanding/typos, etc.).</p> <p><b>SUMMATIVE 2 DUE: 16<sup>th</sup> March 2026, 12pm, on Moodle.</b></p> <p>You will already be covering new, quantitative material at this point, so try to get this done in advance, so the material is fresh!</p>