

## International Geographical Olympiad 2018. Quebec City, Canada

Mark Higginbottom, Schools and Settings Improvement Officer in Halton's Education Team is a volunteer with the Geographical Association ([www.geography.org.uk](http://www.geography.org.uk)). As Co-Chair of Worldwide he leads the brand that engages young geographers from EYFS to post 16 across the country <https://www.geography.org.uk/Get-Involved-1/Student-activities>. This includes a national geography competition for post 16 students of geography. The four winning entries are invited to be members of TeamUK at the International Geographical Olympiad [www.geoolympiad.org](http://www.geoolympiad.org).

Mark is leader of TeamUK, who recently returned from participating in the 15<sup>th</sup> International Geographical Olympiad in Quebec City, Canada. Based at Université Laval <http://igeo2018.ulaval.ca/> the team competed against 42 other countries from across the world. The competition included a written response test, a day of fieldwork and follow up task and a multimedia test. Spare time allowed friendships to be made with students from many different nations as well as the opportunity to explore the city itself. A day excursion to Forêt Montmorency was an incredible experience, exploring the classic Canadian Boreal coniferous forest, learning about the geographical research being carried out and, a highlight was wandering by a Canadian lake, only to come within metres of a Moose! Competition across the countries is huge and TeamUK were rewarded with a silver and a bronze medal.



Team UK 2018

<https://www.geography.org.uk/Announcements-and-updates/uk-geography-students-win-medals-at-international-competition>

Silver medal winner, Zachary, from the Isle of Man said 'I was absolutely honoured to have competed in the 15th International Geography Olympiad. It was truly one of the best weeks of my life, and I'm so ecstatic to have been awarded a Silver Medal. A global event such as this really did open my eyes to a whole set of different cultures and traditions previously unconsidered - and by making friendships from all

over the world, enhanced my global perspective. The fieldwork and excursions were particular highlights - as they broadened our knowledge and appreciation of the cultural and physical landscapes of the local area - taking us from Old Québec to Forêt Montmorency'.

Bronze medal winner, Bree from Cheshire said 'For me one of the highlights of the trip was going to the Opening Ceremony on the first evening of the Olympiad. I found it incredible how in one theatre there were geographers from a staggering 43 countries and I particularly enjoyed meeting and becoming friends with students from countries culturally very different to the UK and finding out more about their traditions, economy and climate. Also, another standout moment would definitely be at the Closing Ceremony when I heard my name being announced and found to my delight that I had won a bronze medal! It meant a great deal to me that my hard work not only during the various tests, but also through my commitment to geography over the years had paid off'.

Mark really hopes post 16 students of geography from across Halton realise this fantastic opportunity and enter the competition for 2019, when the International Geographical Olympiad is held in Hong Kong. The link to details about the Olympiad and the 2019 competition is <https://www.geography.org.uk/GA-WorldWise-international-competition>

Zachary's advice for students keen to enter the national competition this year is; think logically about the answers, trying to back up your suggestions with evidence, as well as staying concise where possible. In the actual tests at iGeo, this logical thinking is key to answering the questions to an appropriate level'.

Bree's advice for those considering entering this year's competition is 'I would encourage students to just give it their best shot and go for it. When you have the opportunity to prove you are worthy of representing the country in the subject you love take it with both hands and just do your best!