

# Geography (Stage 1)

Subject Outline

# Subject outline changes

Below are the current changes to the subject outline. Teachers are encouraged to explore the changes in detail and make relevant adjustments to their teaching, learning, and assessment programs.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| From 2024 | To 2025 onwards | page |
| Stage 1 |
| *Assessment Design Criteria**Analysis and Evaluation (AE2)*Analysis and evaluation of information to determine possible outcomes, make justifiable recommendations, and form conclusions. | *Assessment Design Criteria**Analysis and Evaluation (AE2)*Analysis and evaluation of information to determine possible outcomes, make justifiable recommendations, **and/or** form conclusions. | [9](#_Assessment_design_criteria) |
| *Performance Standards*A, B, and C grade bands | *Performance Standards*A, B, and C grade bands updated to include ‘and/or form conclusions’. | [12](#Page12) |

# Subject description

Geography is a 10-credit subject or a 20-credit subject at Stage 1 and a 20-credit subject at Stage 2.

Through the study of Geography, students develop an understanding of the spatial interrelationships between people, places, and environments. They appreciate the complexity of our world, the diversity of its environments, and the challenges and associated opportunities facing Australia and the world.

Geography develops an appreciation of the importance of place in explanations of economic, social, and environmental phenomena and processes.

Geography provides a systematic, integrative way of exploring, analysing, and applying the concepts of place, space, environment, interconnection, sustainability, scale, and change. Students of Geography identify patterns and trends, and explore and analyse geographical relationships and interdependencies. They use this knowledge to promote a more sustainable way of life and an awareness of social and spatial inequalities.

Through a humanities lens, students investigate spatial aspects of society using inquiry methods that are analytical, critical, and speculative. Through a science lens, students develop an appreciation of the interdependence between the biophysical environment and human activities.

Students engage in geographical inquiry by using geographical methods and skills. They pose geographical questions, seek answers, and evaluate responses, using a range of fieldwork and spatial technology skills. Fieldwork, in all its various forms, is central to the study of Geography, as it enables students to develop their understanding of the world through direct experience.

# Capabilities

The capabilities connect student learning within and across subjects in a range of contexts.

The SACE identifies seven capabilities.

Literacy

In Geography, students extend their literacy skills as they explore, interpret, and evaluate geographical phenomena and issues, and communicate geographically. Students develop their literacy capability by using appropriate geographical terminology, and by reading, interpreting, and creating maps and visual representations. They explore and explain location and spatial relationships, and access, research, analyse, and select appropriate primary and secondary sources. Students communicate in a variety of forms, using appropriate conventions for the acknowledgment of sources. Geography encompasses the field of spatial literacy, including understanding spatial relationships and awareness of how geographical space is represented, analysing issues, and developing solutions within a spatial framework.

Numeracy

Through Geography, students develop their numeracy capability as they investigate location, distance, and spatial distributions, and use measurement tools, scale, and units appropriate to fieldwork and mapping tasks. They use graphs, diagrams, and statistics related to geographical locations, events, features, and other phenomena. Students display data, using appropriate geographical conventions such as transects, cross sections, population pyramids, and thematic maps. In constructing and interpreting maps, students work with numerical concepts of grids, scale, distance, area, and projections. They interpret and extrapolate from statistical information to predict trends and outcomes from data.

Information and communication technology (ICT) capability

In Geography, students develop their ICT capability when they locate, select, evaluate, communicate, and share geographical information using digital tools, including spatial technologies. Students develop their ICT capability by using a range of digital technologies to manipulate and interrogate data. They creatively present research findings using various multimodal approaches, including infographics, maps, and digital presentations. Students enhance their understanding of the ICT capability by exploring the impact and effects of technologies on place, economic activity, and people’s lives.

Critical and creative thinking

In Geography, students develop critical and creative thinking as they explore and investigate geographical information, concepts, and ideas. They develop and practise critical and creative thinking by using logic when evaluating evidence, testing explanations, analysing arguments, and making decisions. Students are encouraged to be innovative and critical in designing fieldwork and creative in proposing management strategies or responses. Students think creatively about the ways in which places and spaces might be better designed, and visualise possibilities. Opportunities for critical and creative thinking are integral to Geography as students make recommendations for improvements to human and physical environments.

Personal and social capability

Students of Geography develop their personal and social capability through becoming aware of how to take responsible personal, social, and/or environmental action in support of or against decisions by organisations, governments, or other bodies. Students develop and refine their skills in listening to, respecting, and acknowledging diverse perspectives and opinions. Students are encouraged to take responsible social and environmental action to advocate for sustainable change in their local area and in society more broadly.

Ethical understanding

In Geography, students develop ethical understanding as they investigate current geographical issues. As students develop their understanding of the concepts of sustainability and social justice, they consider the ethical implications of human behaviour on societies now and for future generations. Through asking ethical questions about human rights and citizenship, students develop informed values and attitudes and become aware of their own roles and responsibilities as citizens of the Earth. When undertaking fieldwork, students consider ethical protocols for investigating and working with people and preserving places and environments.

Intercultural understanding

Through Geography, students develop intercultural understanding as they examine geographical issues and perspectives in a broad range of cultural contexts. Students further develop their intercultural understanding by valuing diversity, researching case studies that challenge pre-existing perceptions, and learning about a range of people, groups, cultures, and nations. They explore issues in local, national, and global contexts to expand their knowledge of, and develop empathy for, a diverse range of groups and peoples.

# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge, cultures, and perspectives

In partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and schools and school sectors, the SACE Board of South Australia supports the development of high-quality learning and assessment design that respects the diverse knowledge, cultures, and perspectives of Indigenous Australians.

The SACE Board encourages teachers to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and perspectives in the design, delivery, and assessment of teaching and learning programs by:

* providing opportunities in SACE subjects for students to learn about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, and contemporary experiences
* recognising and respecting the significant contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to Australian society
* drawing students’ attention to the value of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and perspectives from the past and the present
* promoting the use of culturally appropriate protocols when engaging with and learning from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities

# Learning requirements

The learning requirements summarise the key knowledge, skills and understandings that students are expected to develop and demonstrate through their learning in Stage 1 Geography.

In this subject, students are expected to:

1. demonstrate knowledge and understanding of geographical concepts of place, space, environment, interconnection, sustainability, scale, and change
2. demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the nature and complexity of the interdependence of human and physical environments
3. use geographical and fieldwork skills, including use of spatial technologies, to examine geographical features
4. analyse information to determine management strategies and make recommendations for improvements to human and physical environments
5. examine geographical implications of a contemporary local and/or global issue
6. communicate geographical information and ideas, using subject-specific terminology and visual representations.

# Content

Geography is a 10-credit or a 20-credit subject at Stage 1.

For both a 10-credit subject and a 20-credit subject, teachers design a program that:

* develops students’ understanding and application of key geographical concepts
* develops students’ understanding of the interdependence of human and physical environments
* explores contemporary geographical issues
* develops students’ skills in fieldwork using opportunities in the local area
* examines geographical features, concepts, and issues through the use of a range of skills and techniques, including spatial technologies.

The design of a teaching and learning program should take into account the content provided for each topic and integrate opportunities for students to carry out fieldwork and develop geographical skills.

The following pages discuss geographical skills and the topics.

Geographical skills

The following skills are essential to geographical inquiry. Students use geographical skills to develop their knowledge and understanding of geographical concepts within a specific context. Developing their geographical skills enables students to explore contemporary geographical issues and make recommendations. These skills are integrated into the learning and assessment requirements of Stage 1 Geography.

Students develop and use a range of geographical skills, including:

* collect and record fieldwork data, using techniques such as observation, measuring, counting, testing, sketching, photography, interviewing, mapping, and surveying
* interpret secondary sources of data and information
* use maps and spatial technologies (latitudes, longitudes, grid references, legends or keys, directions, and contours)
* interpret images, including aerial, oblique, and ground photographs, and satellite images
* understand scale (enlargement, reduction, area, and distance)
* analyse and interpret statistics, fieldwork data, maps, profiles, cross-sections, and transects
* identify and analyse patterns and trends, infer relationships, and make predictions
* communicate geographical information, using visual representations such as tables, graphs, diagrams, sketches, photographs, and maps
* make recommendations, form conclusions, and solve problems
* use subject-specific terminology
* acknowledge sources appropriately.

Themes and topics

There are seven topics which are organised under three themes, as follows:

Theme 1: Sustainable Places

* Topic 1: Rural and/or remote places
* Topic 2: Urban places
* Topic 3: Megacities.

Theme 2: Hazards

* Topic 4: Natural hazards
* Topic 5: Biological and human-induced hazards.

Theme 3: Contemporary Issues

* Topic 6: Local issues
* Topic 7: Global issues.

For a 10-credit subject, students study at least two topics from one or two of the themes.

For a 20-credit subject, students study at least four topics, with at least one topic from each theme.

More details of the themes and topics follow.

Theme 1: Sustainable Places

In this theme students examine the concept of place and what is required to ensure that places are sustainable into the future. Places are geographical locations with interacting human and environmental features. The ways in which economic, demographic, social, political, and environmental processes shape these places determine their sustainability and liveability in the present and future. The interconnected challenges faced in places, including population change, employment, transport infrastructure needs, housing, demands for improved health and education services, and other matters related to liveability, are a particular focus of this theme. Students think critically and creatively about ways in which places and spaces might be better designed to meet current and future challenges and ensure sustainability.

Topic 1: Rural and/or remote places

Students examine the characteristics of rural and/or remote places. These may be places where people live, such as farms, mining towns, or regional centres, or natural environments, such as national parks or conservation areas. Students may consider the factors influencing why people, including Indigenous communities, live in, migrate to, visit, or leave these places. Such factors may include employment, transport connections, service provision, isolation, remoteness, access to natural resources, and lifestyle choices.

Students develop their knowledge and understanding in the following key areas:

* location and characteristics of rural and/or remote places
* challenges facing rural and/or remote places
* opportunities provided by rural and/or remote places
* liveability and sustainability of rural and/or remote places
* a case study of a rural and/or remote place.

Topic 2: Urban places

Students examine the growth and development of towns and cities over time. For metropolitan and regional cities, aspects for study may include liveability, urban sprawl, car dependency, walkability, public transport, environmental degradation, green spaces, urban planning, and service provision. Students examine how governments, planners, communities, interest groups, and individuals try to create sustainable places.

Students develop their knowledge and understanding in the following key areas:

* definitions and characteristics of urban places
* processes of urbanisation
* how land use in urban places is organised
* urban planning and development
* liveability and sustainability of urban places
* a case study of a sustainable urban place.

Topic 3: Megacities

Students examine the development and growth of megacities, in both developing and developed countries. On a global scale, the growth of megacities is influenced by world population growth and has an impact on human well-being. This growth has created a range of environmental, social, and economic challenges for people living in such cities and for governments. These challenges may include water, air, and noise pollution, waste management, service provision, crime, land loss, and employment. How people and organisations respond to these challenges may determine the nature, sustainability, and liveability of megacities into the future. Students develop an understanding of what could be required to create sustainable urban environments that meet the needs of people within formal and informal settlements.

Students develop their knowledge and understanding in the following key areas:

* definitions and characteristics of megacities
* factors causing the rise of megacities, including migration and push and pull factors
* changing global distribution of megacities
* environmental, social, and economic challenges and responses
* community and well-being within informal settlements
* a case study of a megacity.

Theme 2: Hazards

This theme examines the concept of hazards, their causes and impact, and how people manage the risk. Hazards can be defined as natural, biological, or human-induced. The impacts of hazards on people and places vary depending on economic, demographic, social, political, and environmental factors. The ability of a population to respond to hazards is determined by their vulnerability to, and awareness of, risk and its management. Students extend their ethical and intercultural understanding through exploring the vulnerability, risk management, and impacts of hazards affecting communities and environments in different locations.

Topic 4: Natural hazards

A natural hazard refers to an extreme natural event that has the potential to negatively affect human systems and result in disaster. It may arise from atmospheric, hydrological, or geomorphic events. Such events include cyclones, tornadoes, droughts, bushfires, flooding, earthquakes, volcanoes, tsunamis, landslides, and avalanches. The effects of natural hazards have increased greatly as a result of our growing world population and increased human interference with ecosystems. Improved methods of prediction and prevention have been important in managing hazard risk to vulnerable populations.

Students develop their knowledge and understanding in the following key areas:

* an overview of the types and classifications of natural hazards
* global distribution of natural hazards
* one or more contemporary case studies of a natural hazard type, examining:
* causes of the natural hazard
* vulnerability to natural hazard risk, including location and social factors
* risk management of natural hazards, including prevention, mitigation, and preparedness
* comparison of vulnerability and risk in different locations
* impacts of disaster on populations and the environment
* local, national, and global responses to disasters.

Topic 5: Biological and human-induced hazards

Biological hazards originate in the biosphere and include plant and animal invasions, and human infectious diseases. Human-induced hazards are the result of human activities that can be from deliberate action or technical error. These include technological and industrial hazards, nuclear disasters, and issues related to civil unrest, such as landmines or acts of terrorism and war.

Students develop their knowledge and understanding in the following key areas:

* an overview of the types and classifications of biological and/or human-induced hazards
* one or more contemporary case studies of a biological or human-induced hazard type, examining:
* spatial distribution of the biological or human-induced hazard
* cause and characteristics of the biological or human-induced hazard
* impacts of the biological or human-induced hazard on populations and the environment
* local, national, and/or global consequences, including effects on travel, trade, and transportation, and global relationships
* vulnerability to biological or human-induced hazards
* risk management, including possible prevention, control, and containment.

Theme 3: Contemporary Issues

This theme enables students to examine a current local or global geographical issue being faced by populations and/or environments. Through making informed decisions, and evaluating and making recommendations for sustainable outcomes, students extend their social and ethical understanding, and critical and creative thinking skills.

Consideration of the contemporary issue should explore the following:

* geographical context of the issue, including where it is, and the nature of the issue
* analysis of the issue, including the causes and impacts of, and perspectives on, the issue
* identification of preferred sustainable outcomes, with reference to social, economic, and environmental perspectives.

Topic 6: Local issues

In the study of issues in the local area, students develop their skills in fieldwork and spatial technologies, and in using, interpreting, and presenting geographical data and information.

At the local scale, students might investigate, for example:

* catchment management of a local river
* water usage in agriculture
* impact of tourism on a local community or environment
* traffic management issues in urban places
* impact of urban sprawl on city suburbs
* preservation and conservation of a wetland
* environmental management along a coastline
* contribution to a revegetation or conservation project
* a current local news item
* nuclear waste storage in remote areas.

Topic 7: Global issues

This topic lends itself to an in-depth study of a current issue facing global environments and/or communities. The chosen area for investigation must have a spatial context, and students must interpret and present geographical data.

At the global scale, students might investigate, for example:

* global conflicts about resource allocations such as water
* impacts of global consumerism
* global waste-management issues, such as the Great Pacific Garbage Patch
* global inequalities, for example, in access to education or vaccinations
* energy options, such as coal-seam gas, nuclear, solar, tidal, or wind
* refugee movements for environmental, social, and other reasons.

# Evidence of learning

Assessment at Stage 1 is school based.

The following assessment types enable students to demonstrate their learning in Stage 1 Geography:

* Assessment Type 1: Geographical Skills and Applications
* Assessment Type 2: Fieldwork.

For a 10-credit subject, students should provide evidence of their learning through four assessments, with at least two assessments from Assessment Type 1 and at least one assessment from Assessment Type 2. Each assessment type should have a weighting of at least 20%.

For a 20-credit subject, students should provide evidence of their learning through eight assessments, with at least four assessments from Assessment Type 1 and at least two assessments from Assessment Type 2. Each assessment type should have a weighting of at least 20%.

# Assessment design criteria

The assessment design criteria are based on the learning requirements and are used by teachers to:

* clarify for the student what they need to learn
* design opportunities for the student to provide evidence of their learning at the highest level of achievement.

The assessment design criteria are the specific features that:

* students need to demonstrate in their evidence of learning
* teachers look for as evidence that students have met the learning requirements.

For this subject, the assessment design criteria are:

* knowledge and understanding
* analysis and evaluation
* application.

The specific features of these criteria are described below.

The set of assessments, as a whole, must give students opportunities to demonstrate each of the specific features by the completion of study of the subject.

## Knowledge and Understanding

The specific features are as follows:

KU1 Knowledge and understanding of geographical concepts.

KU2 Knowledge and understanding of natural, built, economic, and/or social characteristics of places.

## Analysis and Evaluation

The specific features are as follows:

AE1 Analysis of the interactions between, and interdependence of, people and environments at local, national, or global levels.

AE2 Analysis and evaluation of information to determine possible outcomes, make justifiable recommendations, and/or form conclusions.

## Application

The specific features are as follows:

Ap1 Application of geographical and fieldwork skills, including the use of spatial technologies, to identify and examine geographical issues.

Ap2 Communication of geographical information, using subject-specific terminology and visual representations.

# School assessment

The school assessment component for Stage 1 Geography consists of two assessment types:

* Assessment Type 1: Geographical Skills and Applications
* Assessment Type 2: Fieldwork.

## Assessment Type 1: Geographical Skills and Applications

Students produce at least two geographical skills and applications tasks for a 10-credit subject, and at least four for a 20-credit subject, to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of geographical concepts, and to examine geographical features, patterns, and processes.

These tasks may be multimodal, written, and/or oral in form. A written response should be a maximum of 800 words; an oral response should be a maximum of 5 minutes; a response in multimodal form should be of equivalent length.

Geographical skills and applications tasks could include, for example:

* an oral presentation with visual representations about a case study of a megacity or a hazard
* a biological-hazard mapping exercise using spatial technology
* a written response to geographical data making recommendations about a global issue
* a letter, report, or proposal about a local issue
* an interactive presentation about urban planning, using multimedia technology
* data collection and analysis relating to the local area
* comparison of vulnerability of risk of hazards in different locations
* land-use mapping of a rural or remote location
* designing a map with a specific purpose, such as a tourism map or liveability map
* a recommendation about how to respond to global waste issues.

For this assessment type, students provide evidence of their learning in relation to the following assessment design criteria:

* knowledge and understanding
* analysis and evaluation
* application.

## Assessment Type 2: Fieldwork

Students undertake at least one fieldwork activity that is linked to a topic of study for a 10-credit subject, and at least two for a 20-credit subject. They use geographical skills to make observations, to record data in the field, and to identify, select, and analyse the field data. They produce multimodal, written, and/or oral evidence to communicate geographical information and findings, and make recommendations. Fieldwork data collection can be organised as a group or class activity or students can undertake individual fieldwork.

A written response should be a maximum of 1000 words; an oral response should be a maximum of 6 minutes; a response in multimodal form should be of equivalent length.

Fieldwork activities could include, for example:

* the sphere of influence of location X (e.g. park, town, shopping centre)
* how soil type and slope influence vegetation on a selected transect
* the factors influencing which parts of the Coorong are used by the Ngarrindjerri people
* an assessment of one or more of the management strategies employed in the Flinders Ranges National Park and their effectiveness
* the impact of distance from the high tide mark on pH and vegetation of a selected sand dune system
* the appropriateness of the range of parking available at a selected location
* an evaluation of a proposed pedestrian crossing
* an evaluation of the liveability of selected suburbs
* an assessment of the impact of bushfire on the variety of species
* a comparison of management strategies employed along various sections of the coastline.

For this assessment type, students provide evidence of their learning in relation to the following assessment design criteria:

* analysis and evaluation
* application.

# Performance standards

The performance standards describe five levels of achievement, A to E.

Each level of achievement describes the knowledge, skills, and understanding that teachers refer to in deciding how well students have demonstrated their learning on the basis of the evidence provided.

During the teaching and learning program the teacher gives students feedback on their learning, with reference to the performance standards.

At the student’s completion of study of a subject, the teacher makes a decision about the quality of the student’s learning by:

* referring to the performance standards
* taking into account the weighting of each assessment type
* assigning a subject grade between A and E.

Performance standards for Stage 1 Geography

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| - | Knowledge and Understanding | Analysis and Evaluation | Application |
| A | Comprehensive knowledge and understanding of geographical concepts.Comprehensive knowledge and understanding of natural, built, economic, and/or social characteristics of places. | Insightful analysis of the interactions between, and interdependence of, people and environments at local, national, or global levels.Comprehensive analysis and evaluation of information to determine possible outcomes, make justifiable recommendations, and/or form conclusions. | Purposeful and well-considered application of a variety of geographical and fieldwork skills, including the use of spatial technologies, to identify and examine geographical issues.Clear and coherent communication of relevant geographical information, using appropriate subject-specific terminology and visual representations. |
| B | Well-considered knowledge and informed understanding of geographical concepts.Well-considered knowledge and informed understanding of natural, built, economic, and/or social characteristics of places. | Well-informed analysis of the interactions between, and interdependence of, people and environments at local, national, or global levels.Detailed and well-considered analysis and evaluation of information to determine possible outcomes, make justifiable recommendations, and/or form conclusions. | Well-considered application of different geographical and fieldwork skills, including the use of spatial technologies, to identify and examine geographical issues.Clear communication of relevant geographical information, using appropriate subject-specific terminology and visual representations. |
| C | Considered knowledge and understanding of geographical concepts.Considered knowledge and informed understanding of natural, built, economic, and/or social characteristics of places. | Informed analysis of the interactions between, and interdependence of, people and environments at local, national, or global levels.Considered analysis and some evaluation of information to determine possible outcomes, make recommendations, and/or form conclusions. | Competent application of geographical and fieldwork skills, including the use of spatial technologies, to identify and examine geographical issues.Competent communication of generally relevant geographical information, using mostly appropriate subject-specific terminology and visual representations. |
| D | Recognition and basic understanding of some geographical concepts.Basic awareness and some understanding of aspects of natural, built, economic, or social characteristics of places. | Basic consideration and description of the interactions between, and interdependence of, people and environments at local, national, or global levels.Superficial consideration of information to describe possible outcomes and recommendations. | Some application of different geographical and fieldwork skills, which may include the use of spatial technologies.Basic communication of some geographical information, using occasional subject-specific terminology and visual representations. |
| E | Identification of one or more geographical concepts.Emerging awareness of aspects of natural, built, economic, or social characteristics of places. | Brief or attempted description of the interactions between, or interdependence of, people and environments at local, national, or global levels.Description of information linked to a possible outcome or recommendation. | Limited application of geographical and fieldwork skills.Attempted communication of geographical information, with limited use of subject-specific terminology or visual representations. |