



Geography Stages 4-5 Support Material Part A

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FOREWORD

Purpose of the support material

This document is Part A of material provided by the Board of Studies and is designed to support teachers in the effective implementation of the Stages 4—5 Geography Syllabus. Part A is designed to further clarify the specific features of the syllabus and provide advice as a starting point to assist teachers as they develop teaching and learning programs from the syllabus. Part B provides additional information about assessment and the Australian History, Geography, Civics and Citizenship School Certificate Test, and civics and citizenship.

The advice provided in the material is intended to complement other activities supporting the implementation of the syllabus conducted by school sectors and professional associations. Part A and Part B are not designed as specific programs or units of work. They are designed to tease out the links within the syllabus between the key features of fieldwork, contemporary geographical issues, perspectives, civics and citizenship, key competencies, literacy, geographical tools and skills, and the content of the Focus Areas.

Part A of the support material is structured in the following way:

Section 1 Introduction

General advice about key aspects of the syllabus:

- 1.1 Outcomes
- 1.2 Content

Section 2 Key features of the syllabus

Advice and sample material in relation to:

- 2.1 Fieldwork
- 2.2 Contemporary Geographical Issues
- 2.3 Perspectives
- 2.4 Civics and Citizenship
- 2.5 Key Competencies
- 2.6 Literacy in Geography

Section 3 Geographical Tools and Skills

- 3.1 Geographical Tools
- 3.2 Geographical Skills

Section 4 Programming the syllabus

Advice and sample material in relation to:

- 4.1 Designing teaching/learning units around course outcomes
- 4.2 An approach to planning a teaching and learning program from the syllabus

Section 5 Assessment

- 5.1 Assessment for assigning the School Certificate grade
- 5.2 The School Certificate Test

Introduction

The 1998 Geography (Stages 4 —5) syllabus replaces the 1992 syllabus. It incorporates:

- Geography (Mandatory) Stage 4 — GlobalGeography
- Geography (Mandatory) Stage 5 — AustralianGeography
- Geography (Elective) Stage 4 and/or 5.

The syllabus has:

- a rationale, aim and objectives which outline the importance of Geography, and its study within the school curriculum, and which identify the specific goals of learning in terms of knowledge and understanding, skills, and values and attitudes.
- outcomes, which express the specific intended results of teaching and learning in the syllabus and which are derived from the syllabus objectives and related to the syllabus content.
- content, which includes:
 - ⇒ Geographical Tools
 - ⇒ Geographical Skills
 - ⇒ Focus Areas.

1.1 Outcomes

The new syllabus emphasises outcomes (Syllabus, page 16). The outcomes are derived from the syllabus objectives and provide clear statements of the knowledge and understanding, and skills that students are expected to gain by the conclusion of each Stage.

In the syllabus, the outcomes:

- are organised in relation to the objectives
- are linked explicitly to the syllabus content
- cater for the full range of students.

The subject matter investigated and the skills developed through the mandatory Geography courses are designed to promote the values and attitudes listed on page 23 of the Syllabus.

1.2 Content

The content of both Stage 4 and Stage 5 Mandatory courses is comprised of:

- Geographical Tools
- Geographical Skills
- Values and Attitudes
- Focus Areas

The content described in Geographical Tools, Geographical Skills, and Values and Attitudes is to be integrated with the content in the Focus Areas. The Geographical Tools to be integrated in each Stage are identified on page 19 of

the Syllabus, while the Geographical Skills are identified on page 21. The Values and Attitudes are identified on page 23.

Stage 4 Global Geography is comprised of four Focus Areas:

- Investigating the World (10% of course time)
- Global Environments (40% of course time)
- Managing Global Environments (30% of course time)
- Global Citizenship (20% of course time).

Stage 5 Australian Geography is comprised of four Focus Areas:

- Investigating Australia's Identity (20% of course time)
- Changing Australian Environments (30% of course time)
- Issues in Australian Environments (20% of course time)
- Australia in Its Regional and Global Context (30% of course time).

2 Key features of the syllabus

Described below are key features taken into account when developing the syllabus outcomes and content. They are not additional items for teachers to program, but are embedded in the outcomes and content, and developed through the teaching and learning activities teachers will use to help students achieve the outcomes.

2.1 Fieldwork

Fieldwork is an essential component in the study of Geography as it enables a variety of teaching and learning experiences to be organised that cater for different learning styles and different assessment techniques. The fieldwork can be on a variety of scales and locations. Local fieldwork often provides a valuable context for student learning because of the direct involvement of students in an area they can personally relate to, and the accessibility of information. If the local area is selected, local newspapers, councils and government departments, businesses, and parents will become an excellent source of information for the study of the community. In particular, local case studies can highlight issues that students will have first hand experience of, and probably opinions about.

In Stage 4 fieldwork, Australian sample studies can be used to facilitate understanding of global environments. For example an excursion to a local wetland can be used to highlight the nature of wetland environments. Students could then gain an appreciation of the broader issues involved on an international scale, such as the global distribution of the ecosystem, relevant geographical issues, and changing management strategies, as well as people's relationship to the land.

In the Mandatory Stage 5 course the scope of content allows for many potential fieldwork experiences because the focus is Australian Geography. The scale and location of the fieldwork will vary, depending on the geographical study. The Stage 5 syllabus requires at least one significant fieldwork task to be undertaken in the Focus Area: **Issues in Australian Environments**. Students need to use the skills of acquiring geographical information to research a Contemporary

Geographical Issue. The fieldwork need not relate only to that particular Focus Area but can be integrated with other Focus Areas as well.

For example, coastal management provides the opportunity to study a variety of issues such as physical processes forming coasts and conflicts arising between different users of the environment such as recreational users, local residents, conservation groups, holiday makers, local developers and council planners. Interviewing such groups would enable students to acquire geographical information and to evaluate solutions to the management of the area. Students would also develop an understanding of civics and citizenship through decision-making and conflict resolution in Australian communities.

Alternatively, urban growth and decline could be selected, allowing students to conduct a study of a country town in decline, or a rapidly growing coastal area such as, for example, Port Macquarie or the Gold Coast. A large city such as Sydney would also present many opportunities for fieldwork in this Focus Area.

Fieldwork activities must be carefully planned to achieve the outcomes of the course, and need to be fully integrated with the teaching and learning program. The emphasis should be on real field experiences that students undertake to **learn about** specific concepts and techniques which they **learn to** apply in a specific context. Pre-fieldwork and post-fieldwork activities are an essential part of any successful fieldwork activity.

2.2 Contemporary Geographical Issues

Contemporary geographical issues provide teachers and students with opportunities to engage in teaching and learning about geographical processes in the context of relevant and engaging problems or concerns. Students are able to use their prior knowledge and experiences as they access information sources about the geographical issue and attempt to find solutions. It is important that teachers ensure information provided to students demonstrates the spatial, ecological and management dimensions of the issue and comes from a variety of information sources. It is also important that students learn to be discerning about information, including that from the media, be aware of the reporting of contemporary geographical issues, and are able to analyse critically and make informed judgements.

2.3 Perspectives

The study of Geography gives the student the opportunity to consider a range of perspectives on the world through time, space and place. A perspective is a way of viewing the world, the people in it, their relationships with each other and with the environment. The perspectives listed in the syllabus are those of indigenous peoples, especially Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and gender, intercultural, socio-economic and religious perspectives.

The ability to recognise and employ a variety of perspectives adds other dimensions to knowledge of environments and increases geographical

understanding. The perspectives themselves are an inherent part of Geography and are embedded in the content of the syllabus and, as such, should be integrated into units of teaching and learning. Outcome 5.6: *analyses the impact of different perspectives on geographical issues at local, national and global scales* explicitly requires students to develop their knowledge and understanding of perspectives. This outcome is targeted in three of the four Stage 5 Focus Areas.

The following are some examples of possible ways to integrate perspectives into teaching and learning programs.

In the Focus Area: **5A2 Changing Australian Environments**, students learn **about** the effects of people on the physical environment. This provides the opportunity to contrast ways of viewing the world by a range of groups such as landholders, Aboriginal people, conservation groups, and governments. In particular the Aboriginal perspective of their relationship with the land, both spiritual and as land managers, can be contrasted with European views of the land and their different land management techniques, both past and present. This can then be studied in light of government policy, and from the perspective of conservation groups who are pressuring landholders to practise sustainability in their land management. Early farming practices could be contrasted with current farming techniques to highlight how perspectives change over time.

Such an approach would enable these concepts to be revisited in the Focus Area: **5A3 Issues in Australian Environments**. This Focus Area, by its very nature, allows a range of perspectives to be investigated due to the fact that an issue only exists when there is more than one viewpoint. Comparing Aboriginal land management with contemporary land management practice, and how Aboriginal principles are being adopted into the current land management practices in National Parks and on some farms, enables an Aboriginal perspective to be explored. Such an approach specifically targets outcome 5.6.

In the same Focus Area, the Group B issue *urban growth and decline* presents the opportunity to explore a range of socio-economic and gender perspectives as issues related to urban redevelopment, such as poverty and gentrification, are explored. Similarly, issues related to urban growth such as the concentration of single parent (predominantly single mother) families into certain suburbs, and the location of young families in the outer suburbs of cities, and the provision of services to these groups compared to more affluent areas, allow these perspectives to be further explored.

2.4 Civics and Citizenship

Civics and citizenship education terms and concepts are integrated throughout the syllabus content. While students may have different experiences and understanding of citizenship to which teachers need to be sensitive, civics and citizenship education in Geography is promoting the following values:

- a sense of the students' own worth as participants in Australian society
- respect for the rights and dignity of all people
- respect for their own culture and the culture of others
- appreciation of the value of students' own heritage and the heritage of others

- commitment to democratic processes, including freedom of speech, association and religion
- commitment to social justice
- commitment to ecological sustainability
- commitment to active and responsible participation in community and public affairs
- commitment to critical evaluation of ideas, norms and values.

2.4.1 Civics and Citizenship education in Geography

Civics and citizenship education terms and concepts are integrated throughout the syllabus outcomes and content, deriving from the study of spatial and ecological dimensions of geographical phenomena. The spatial dimension of where things are and why they are there, combined with the ecological dimension of how humans interact with environments, allows students to consider how individuals, groups and governments make decisions and the role they themselves can play as active citizens participating in a democracy. Through the study of Geography, students learn how they can take an active role in shaping a fairer society in the future. In terms of what students **learn about** (the knowledge and understanding outcomes), students learn how to apply geographical knowledge, understanding and skills necessary for active and informed citizenship (Syllabus, page 8).

Civics and citizenship education is grounded in the knowledge and understanding and skills development explicit in the Geography syllabus and has a number of dimensions. In terms of what students **learn about**, it is the study of:

- government and its functions, rules and laws, and the rights and responsibilities of citizens, and
- democracy and the democratic process.

The depth and breadth of knowledge of, and understanding about, civics and citizenship in the syllabus is organised into the areas of:

- Australian identity
- rights and responsibilities
- decision-making and democratic processes (Syllabus, page 10).

In terms of what students **learn to do**, the syllabus provides opportunities to develop the skills needed for active and informed citizenship, such as critical reflection and inquiry, how to make and suspend judgement in an informed way, solving problems and negotiating conflict, communicating information, ideas and viewpoints and co-operating with others. Underpinning the knowledge and skills is a set of values associated with democratic citizenship and civil society, including values in social justice and equality, democratic processes, social cohesion, ethical behaviour, intercultural understanding and tolerance of difference. As they work towards the values and attitudes objectives, students develop:

- a sense of responsibility to their communities and wider society
- the ability to participate responsibly, both as individuals and as members of a group
- a commitment to the peaceful resolution of conflict, and

- a commitment to individual freedom and the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy.

Civics and Citizenship education must be explored through the context of syllabus outcomes and content. Outcomes 4.9: *explains how geographical knowledge, understanding and skills contribute to active and informed citizenship* and 5.9: *applies geographical knowledge, understanding and skills to demonstrate active and informed citizenship* (Syllabus, page 16) relate specifically to civics and citizenship education. It is important that teachers, when programming the course, provide both the relevant content and the teaching/learning activities that provide a context for effective learning and which allow students to achieve these outcomes.

While 5.9 is not a targeted outcome for Focus Area: **5A1 Investigating Australia's Identity**, the entire topic reflects the terms and concepts within the civics and citizenship education strand Australian Identity (Syllabus, page 10). Outcome 5.4: *demonstrates a sense of place about Australian environments* offers scope for teachers and students to explore civics and citizenship concepts as they cover the content of Australia's diverse human environments

- built: major cities and towns, specialised urban centres, agricultural land uses, major industrial centres, mining landscapes
- social/cultural: political divisions; population size, distribution and composition; patterns of work; lifestyle; cultural identity.

An examination of political divisions will explicitly involve civics and citizenship education as students explore the concepts of electoral divisions —how these are established, the concept of gerrymander, and the ways electoral boundaries are used politically. Population size, distribution and composition, and patterns of work also provide scope to explore civics and citizenship education. Geographical tools, such as electoral maps, population statistics, and demographic projection graphs, can be used to assist the development of student knowledge and understanding of the civics and citizenship concepts being explored, while at the same time, students are developing skills in the knowledge and understanding, and use, of these geographical tools.

Australia and its Aboriginal heritage opens opportunities for discussion of the concept of a sense of place (outcome 5.4), specifically the Aboriginal sense of place being tied inextricably to their sense of personal, spiritual and group identity. The concept of a sense of place is a key element in Geography, and has both spatial and ecological dimensions.

Knowledge and understanding gained during the course of this Focus Area will be built on during later Focus Areas, when the teaching and learning activities can be given more direct civics and citizenship focus.

For example, during Focus Area: **5A2 Changing Australian Environments**, students learn about civics and citizenship education explicitly through the content area of concepts and experiences of citizenship for Australian Aboriginal communities. Some focus questions might be:

- Who made decisions in relation to the relocation of Aboriginal people?
- Why were these decisions made?

- Where were Aboriginal people dispersed to, and under what conditions did they find work?
- How were their experiences of work different from their non-Aboriginal contemporaries?
- What were the issues involved in the Mabo case?

The issues here, and the role of Eddie Mabo, also relate well to developing the concept of a sense of place. It would be useful to liaise with History teachers and attempt to complement the History program in Stage 5 which looks at issues of Aboriginal experience of citizenship.

As part of the teaching and learning program, students could examine maps of Australia, delineating the areas of land claimed under native title. These could be contrasted with Aboriginal dialect or territorial maps at the time of European contact. Geographical features of the areas and associated waterways and land usage patterns, would also be appropriate to include as part of the teaching/learning sequence and would give students skills experience with geographical tools. Mapping patterns of dispersion, stations and reserves would also provide skills development and enhance student understanding of the consequences of dispossession relating to the Aboriginal sense of place and experience of citizenship.

The focus questions above also target outcome 5.6: *analyses the impact of different perspectives on geographical issues at local, national and global scales.* This demonstrates how teachers, as they plan teaching and learning units, can generate civics and citizenship education at the same time that they are exposing students to some of the different perspectives specified by the syllabus. In this case, there is the Aboriginal perspective, and the different viewpoints of farmers or graziers, and State and Federal Governments, as well as the legal viewpoint. It is not a matter of the extent of content, it is a question of the focus and context for learning that teachers provide in order to allow students to explore civics and citizenship issues and perspectives, as they cover the syllabus content.

In the Focus Area: **5A2 Changing Australian Environments**, students are required to complete ONE study of the changing interactions between an Australian community and its environment. There are a number of possible community studies that would be appropriate. Three examples are listed in the following table.

Gold Coast	South Sydney	Newcastle
<p>Growth of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ business ➤ residential areas ➤ tourism <p>(outcomes 5.1 and 5.2)</p> <p>Changes to the hinterland, coastal estates, high-rise beachfront etc. (outcome 5.5)</p> <p>Roles of various groups, including government planners and business (for example Chamber of Commerce) (outcome 5.6)</p> <p>The processes and strategies groups utilised to input/ influence/change decisions/situations (outcome 5.9)</p>	<p>Changes to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ the inner city ➤ factories and industry ➤ football —team and local supporters ➤ the Block and the Aboriginal community <p>Issues associated with urban renewal.</p> <p>Rise of :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ gentrification <p>(outcome 5.5)</p> <p>Roles of various groups, including the different levels of government. (outcome 5.6)</p> <p>The processes and strategies groups utilised to input/ influence/change decisions/situations (outcome 5.9)</p>	<p>Closure of BHP and associated industries. Impact on the local community (outcomes 5.1 and 5.2). Redevelopment of docklands. The role of the government in attracting new industry and providing assistance packages for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ workers ➤ community. <p>(outcome 5.6)</p> <p>The processes and strategies groups utilised to input/ influence/change decisions/situations. (outcome 5.9)</p>

Some possible focus questions to include during the course of the study, which would draw out civics and citizenship discussion, might be:

- What groups have benefited from the changing interactions between community and environment? What groups have not benefited?
- What role did each group play in shaping this change?
- How did they bring about the change?
- What did individuals do to influence the decision making process?
- Were any legal processes accessed? If so, which ones?
- What were the outcomes?

When looking at the built environment of the case study area, teachers can address issues of zoning, and rules and regulations concerning environmental issues. Students will have prior knowledge of the three levels of government from the K —6 HSIE syllabus; it is appropriate, however, for Geography teachers to revisit this briefly in order to clarify for students the appropriate level of government with jurisdiction over the issues under study.

Some suggested focus questions to illustrate civic decision-making by local government are:

- Who makes the decisions about zoning?
- What are the rights of residents, or farmers, or industrialists when it comes to land usage?
- How can people access the decision-making process?
- What are the roles of the Land and Environment Court, and the Environmental Protection Agency?

These questions focus student attention on civics and citizenship education in the areas of rules and laws, law courts, law enforcement, changes to rules and laws, rights and responsibilities, government functions, and politics (Syllabus, page 10).

If the chosen case study was local to the school, a field trip could be used to give students the opportunity to discover, through their own investigation, the different viewpoints of developers, council, tourists, business people, and conservation groups. Their inquiry would also allow students to find out what laws and council regulations were applicable, and what strategies various interest groups use to sway opinion and influence the decision-making process. Such a fieldwork activity is suitable for group work.

Prior learning from Focus Areas 5A2 and 5A3 would have addressed ecologically sustainable development in Australia. Some focus questions might include:

- Why is ecologically sustainable development an important goal?
- What groups exist in Australia that are involved in promoting ecologically sustainable development at a:
 - local level —local residential action groups
 - national level —groups like the Australian Conservation Foundation and the Wilderness Society
 - global level —groups like Greenpeace

- What roles do State and Federal Governments play in achieving ecologically sustainable development?
- What responsibilities does business have in ensuring that Australia has an ecologically sustainable future?
- How can Aboriginal management techniques be adopted in land management to ensure an ecologically sustainable future?

A follow up teaching and learning sequence that focuses on Australia's role in relation to global issues including ecologically sustainable development and global civics and citizenship, could be explored through Focus Area: **5A4 Australia in its Regional and Global Context**. While all students **learn about** regional and global links, the list of possible links in the Syllabus (page 32) is not mandatory. The selection of foreign aid and investment provides opportunities for the teaching and learning program to include Australian-global citizenship education, as does ecologically sustainable development within the list of options under strategies for a better future. From discussion generated by these study topics, citizenship issues can be teased out, such as rules and laws, law enforcement, ethics, economic and environmental responsibilities, justice, conflict, lobby groups and their role in international politics, the role of governments, natural heritage, and human, civil and legal rights and international conventions. Targeted outcomes could be 5.7: *explains Australia's links with other countries and its role in the global community* and 5.6: *analyses the impact of different perspectives on geographical issues at local, national and global scales*.

There are two distinct Australian-global citizenship issues here —the ethics of resource exploitation by Australian companies in countries outside Australia, and the issue of how and why Australia gives aid to developing countries. To introduce students to the content area, some statistics on Australian foreign investment might be appropriate. Some questions to encourage students to think about the issues and to generate some discussion might be:

- What responsibilities do Australian companies have in other countries?
- Should Australian environmental laws apply to Australian companies operating overseas?

An overview of contemporary examples of Australian companies involved in environmental controversies would be useful before students begin their own research on the issue. Students could then view documentaries, and collect media reports, on issues associated with Australian companies operating overseas, and the impact their operations have had, or are having, on both the environment and the local people.

This type of study lends itself to an examination of the rights that people have in these other countries compared to the rights Australians have. It allows students to explore how they would feel if companies from overseas moved into their local area. For example:

- Would they regard the resulting activity as being good for their local area, or would they see it as exploitation?
- Who benefits and who doesn't from overseas investment?
- Who makes the decisions about which companies can have exploration rights, over what and for how long?
- What aspects of the levels of government do people need to know about in order to influence the decision-making process?

Students can generate flow charts of case examples and mind maps of people who have a vested interest in the project. They can examine the different perspectives of the company, the governments of both Australia and the country involved, the people affected who might benefit because of job opportunities, but also experience environmental degradation or pollution, and the perspective of international watch dog committees and environmental pressure groups.

The study of Australian investment in overseas countries could lead to the question: As a developed country, what role should Australia play in the region? This question would be an effective lead-in to an examination of Australia's foreign aid. Students can access information via the internet from aid organisations like Ausaid, World Vision, Community Aid Abroad, and other relevant organisations. A guest speaker may be appropriate. The focus for Australian-global civics and citizenship would relate to the issue of how the Australian Government determines who should receive aid, and what sort of aid they will receive. Some aid agencies publish the criteria they use to determine who should receive aid and, using these criteria, students, working in small groups, could be given a scenario where several neighbouring countries ask Australia for aid and the students themselves make the decision about who should receive what.

When talking about why we give aid—for altruistic or political or economic reasons—students may raise the issue that governments should be responsible for those in need at home before they give aid overseas. This could lead into discussion of Australia's role as a good global citizen. There are sufficient resources available to support a substantial investigation by students into this topic, and it can be informed by an investigation, using graphs and statistics, of other countries' aid commitments, especially within our region.

To generate discussion, the following focus questions would be appropriate:

- How much aid does Australia give overseas? Within our region?
- Which countries receive aid from Australia?
- Are conditions applied to these countries? If so, what are they?
- What role has Australia played in Papua New Guinea's development? How has this role changed over time?
- How does this influence contrast with Australia's relationship with Indonesia? What reasons are there for this difference?
- What role did Australia play in East Timor's referendum and eventual independence? How is Australia supporting East Timor currently?

2.5 Key Competencies

Key competencies are developed by what students **are doing** in the classroom, as well as by what they **are learning about** by doing. Key competencies are not developed by teachers attempting to teach them in isolation, although it is important for teachers to be explicit about the competencies as students are engaging in the learning situations that will develop them.

An important aspect of developing key competencies is reflection by students about what they are doing, and what skills they are applying to the learning situation. When students use climatic data, location maps and population statistics, they are developing the key competency of *Using mathematical ideas and techniques*. For this reason it is important that teachers, as they engage students in these activities, explicitly draw students attention to the fact that they are actively using mathematical concepts and techniques, or the skills of problem solving and collecting, organising and communicating information. Through a fieldtrip to a study site, or an assignment on a community, students are developing the key competencies of *Collecting, analysing and organising information*. As students write up a report on fieldwork, or present ideas orally about issues in a community they have studied, they are developing the key competency *Communicating ideas and information*.

In the same way, a research project on a case study will enable students to demonstrate this key competency. If the activity or assignment were designed to include group work, such a fieldwork or assignment activity would also enable students to develop the key competency *Working with others and in teams*.

In the fieldwork activity, the focus could be usage of the case study area. Each group could be given a different point of view to research and could focus on interviewing appropriate people such as a local business person, a local resident or a recreational user. Through the process of deciding whom to interview, constructing the set of questions and then carrying out the interview, students are developing the key competency *Planning and organising activities*. A post-fieldwork activity could involve discussion of the issue from all the researched points of view, and evaluation of these. Students could then present some management proposals. Such an exercise would encourage the development of the key competency *Solving problems*. Before the fieldwork activity took place, the teacher could organise a pre-fieldwork activity, such as the collection of climatic information from the Bureau of Meteorology. In doing this, students are developing the key competency *Using technology*.

When group work tasks are designed to develop the key competency *Working with others and in teams*, it is important that teachers allow opportunities for students to reflect upon the processes involved in group work:

- allocation of tasks to group members
- mutual dependence and effort
- difficulties faced finding appropriate information and how these were overcome
- the extent to which each member's participation was fair and effective
- any conflict that arose and why, and how conflict was resolved
- how successful the final group product was.

Through their reflection on such processes, students refine their understanding of the various skills involved in these key competencies and can develop strategies for improving their skills the next time they are given a similar task. Students benefit from explicit teaching about, and for, the key competencies, in context, which assists the reflection process.

2.6 Literacy in Geography

Literacy skills in reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing are essential to the acquisition of geographical skills and knowledge. Acquiring, processing and communicating geographical information draws on reading a wide variety of text types, and listening to and viewing a range of geographical information sources. Students need to be exposed to a range of these sources of geographic information in order to develop their literacy skills in the study of Geography. Text forms and possible tasks that will offer students a variety of experiences can be found on page 11 of the Syllabus.

The skills objectives: *Through the study of Geography, students will develop skills in:*

- *acquiring geographical information*
- *processing geographical information*
- *communicating geographical information*

are expressed explicitly in outcomes 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 in Stage 4, and 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 in Stage 5 (Syllabus, page16). The knowledge and understanding outcomes of Stages 4 and 5 also develop literacy skills as students *recount, explain, describe* etc. It might also be useful for teachers to refer to the Glossary of Key Words in *The New Higher School Certificate Assessment Support Document*, which is designed to clarify what students are expected to do when they are explaining, discussing, describing etc. in Stage 6, but which would equally apply in Stages 4 and 5.

Fieldwork, research and communication, explicit in the Geography syllabus, provide students with opportunities to develop their literacy skills. Students should have experience with different text types, both in terms of their exposure to varied text types and their own creation of them. Texts, forms and possible tasks that will offer students a variety of experiences are listed in the syllabus on page 11. Information and communication technology skills, including computer literacy skills, should also be developed as students interact with issues and content. The activities, texts, technologies and media students interact with as they acquire literacy skills are also developing their acquisition of key competencies.

3 Geographical Tools and Skills

Geographical tools and skills are an essential part of the content of Geography. Students need to learn about, as well as how to use, geographical tools and skills. Geographical tools and skills must be integrated with the content of the Focus Areas.

3.1 Geographical Tools

In the study of Geography students need to use a wide variety of geographical tools. Page 19 of the Syllabus specifically lists the range of tools related to maps, fieldwork, graphs and statistics, and photographs that need to be used in undertaking the study of Geography. These tools are an essential component of the content for each course and need to be fully integrated into the teaching and learning program so that students are given opportunities to meet the course outcomes.

For example, in developing a sense of place (outcome 5.4), mapping activities are essential. These could include a wide range of activities based around synoptic charts and topographic maps that develop further understanding of some of the geographical tools listed on page 19. The study of historic climatic data and population statistics could enhance student understanding of the character of place. Accessing photographs and/or satellite images would further develop this sense of place and should be used where possible to develop students knowledge, understanding and application of geographical tools.

3.2 Geographical Skills

During the study of Geography, students will develop the skills of acquiring geographical information, processing geographical information, communicating geographical information, and participating as active and informed citizens (Syllabus, page 21). These skills are an essential component of the content for each course and, along with geographical tools, need to be integrated into the teaching content of the Focus Areas.

Student acquisition of the geographical tools and skills, as well as the values and attitudes which permeate all aspects of the courses, are expressed in the course outcomes.

4 Programming the Syllabus

The Stages 4 and 5 Geography and History courses are designed to be complementary. While the integrity of both subjects needs to be maintained, it is possible to design programs to maximise complementary concepts. It is good practice for Geography teachers to liaise with the History teachers to maximise complementary learning opportunities and activities. Where appropriate, it is useful to have coordinated learning, especially in relation to civics and citizenship education.

Factors to consider when designing appropriate teaching/learning units will be student interest, teacher expertise, existing resources, and potential fieldwork experiences accessible to the school.

While all Focus Areas within the Mandatory Stage 4 and Stage 5 courses are compulsory, teachers will select different geographical studies through which to investigate and expand on syllabus content. When selecting the geographical studies, teachers need to consider:

- how far they provide a balanced and broad understanding of the spatial and ecological dimensions of the world, and the geographical processes and issues which impact on global environments (Stage 4)
- how far they provide a balanced and broad understanding of the unique characteristics and location of Australia, changing Australian environments and the geographical issues impacting on Australian environments (Stage 5)
- that they meet syllabus content requirements
- how they may be of particular relevance or interest to students
- resources available to support teaching and learning
- how fieldwork may be integrated into the study.

4.1 Designing teaching and learning units around course outcomes

It is essential that teachers focus programming around the course outcomes. Prior learning should also be taken into consideration when programs are being written. Students develop their knowledge and understanding and skills in Geography from Stages 1 to 3, and teachers can expect that students will have achieved the Stage 3 outcomes of the HSIE K—6 Syllabus, which relate to the study of Geography. These outcomes are listed on page 17 of the Geography Stages 4-5 Syllabus. Geography outcomes build from K—6, through Stage 4 and Stage 5, and lead into the outcomes of the Stage 6 course.

Teachers should consider the following when programming the course:

- that all syllabus outcomes are addressed and students are given the opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of them
- that there is a balance between breadth and depth in the treatment of content
- that acquisition of both skills and knowledge are part of students learning experiences
- that students will be able to demonstrate aspects of their achievement of the outcomes in the School Certificate test.

The outcomes in the Stages 4—5 Geography syllabus are designed to:

- provide clear expectations of student achievement at the end of each stage
- identify the progress that is expected in student achievement from Stage 4 to Stage 5
- assist development of teaching and learning programs
- provide a focus for assessment
- allow clear reporting of achievement.

When programming the course, planning units of work and developing an assessment program, it is important that teachers ensure that the **outcomes of the course are being comprehensively and appropriately addressed.**

The following pages describe possible approaches to planning teaching and learning programs that address syllabus outcomes.

4.2 Issues to consider when planning a teaching and learning program from the syllabus for the Stage 5 Mandatory course

Content within the Focus Areas is broad and allows considerable flexibility in terms of programming. The following suggestions are offered to assist teachers to develop their own teaching and learning programs that are outcomes-based.

Step 1: Determining syllabus requirements, selection of topics and time allocation

The Geography Stage 5 (Mandatory) Syllabus clearly outlines geographical tools, skills and Focus Area content requirements for implementation of the course. Within the Focus Areas, however, there is considerable flexibility for choice of case studies and fieldwork experiences. Student interest, teacher expertise, the availability of resource material and the accessibility of potential fieldwork sites, will encourage a variety of programs across schools and systems. It is also appropriate for teachers to use the content of the Focus Areas to draw out discussion of specific perspectives and civics and citizenship education, and this will also vary according to the needs, location and resources of schools.

Step 2: Identifying targeted outcomes for each topic

It is important that outcomes for Geography Stages 4 —5 are related to the whole course and not linked only to particular topics or sections of work. When programming teaching and learning experiences to ensure that all outcomes are addressed, teachers should be clear about where and when each of the outcomes is being explicitly taught throughout the course. This is not to suggest that other outcomes are not being addressed through the topic. However, it is the targeted outcomes that provide the focus for the teaching and learning activities.

This approach allows teachers to make a clear link between the syllabus outcomes, content, and the assessment program. Teachers would devise an assessment schedule to meet the needs of their own students and teaching programs.

Step 3: Developing an assessment schedule

Before devising an assessment schedule for Year 10, teachers will need to be clear about the outcomes targeted by the content covered in each Focus Area. Once this has been established, teachers can determine the range of tasks and the outcomes to be targeted by each task. It is important to remember that a single task can assess a variety of outcomes and that each outcome does not have to be targeted in every assessment task.

Once the targeted outcomes have been selected, teachers should devise the type of task that best allows students to demonstrate their achievement of the outcomes. For example, if outcomes 5.1: *identifies, gathers and evaluates geographical information* and 5.2: *analyses, organises and synthesises geographical information* are targeted, the task should allow the students to complete some independent research. Therefore the task could be designed as a fieldwork exercise.

It is also important to remember that, where tasks are scheduled for the Stage 5 course in Year 10, greater weight would generally be given to those tasks held towards the end of the course. This will ensure that students are given the opportunity to demonstrate their maximum level of achievement of the knowledge and understanding, and skills outcomes relative to the Draft Course Performance Descriptors.

A model assessment schedule is provided on page 21. The development of this assessment program recognised the following guiding principles:

- that outcomes are taught before being assessed
- that an outcome does not need to be formally assessed every time it is targeted for teaching and learning
- that all outcomes should be assessed at least once
- that the areas of assessment fit the outcomes selected for assessment in a particular task (for example, an examination/test item is inappropriate for assessing the aspect of the outcomes related to oral communication of geographical investigation).

Step 4: Devising the assessment tasks

The next stage in the process is for the teacher to determine the wording of the task, including the assessment criteria to indicate to students how, and on what, their performance will be assessed. These assessment criteria may appear in a format similar to the assessment rubrics appearing in Stage 6 specimen exam papers, or they may be structured to give students very specific information, including a mark breakdown, on what they are expected to do in order to achieve the outcomes. The critical point to make about the design of any assessment task is that the expectations of the task should be absolutely clear to the students and obviously linked to the outcomes being targeted.

Take, for example, the fieldwork exercise referred to above. If 5.3: *selects and uses appropriate written, oral and graphic forms to communicate geographical information* is a targeted outcome, the teacher may decide that an oral presentation would be an appropriate format through which the students can demonstrate their understanding of content gained through their fieldwork. The content focus of the task will depend on the timing of the task relative to the overall program of teaching and learning.

Teachers will need to prepare the field trip in advance, particularly if the task targets outcome 5.6: *analyses the impact of different perspectives on geographical issues at local, national and global scales*. For example, coastal management provides the opportunity to study a variety of issues such as physical processes forming coasts, conflicts arising between different users of the environment such as recreational users, local residents, conservation groups/landcare groups, holiday makers, local developers and council planners (see page 5 of this document). Interviewing such groups would enable students to use inquiry geography and to evaluate solutions to the management of the area. Through this study, students would also develop an understanding of civics and citizenship through decision-making and conflict resolution in Australian communities. Members of different groups (Council, National Parks and Wildlife,

the business community, etc) would need to be available to the students so that they can interview them as part of their research.

**A sample assessment schedule for Year 10:
(Tasks are suggestions only)**

	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4
Outcomes	5.2; 5.5; 5.8	5.1; 5.3; 5.4; 5.6; 5.9	5.1; 5.3; 5.6; 5.7; 5.9	5.1; 5.2; 5.3; 5.4; 5.5; 5.6; 5.7; 5.8; 5.9
Time of Task	Late Term 1	Late Term 2	Late Term 3	Early Term 4
Nature of Task	Skills Task —using the geographical tools of maps, climatic graphs and statistics, and photographs	Fieldwork Task and Oral Presentation Issue-based study — for example, coastal management	Research Task (with Group and Individual components) — Australia's changing regional and global role	Final Exam: all topics. Mapping exercise and Graphs questions — both based on a broadsheet Short answer questions Extended response (essay)
Task Weighting	15%	25%	25%	35%

5 Assessment

Assessment is the process of identifying, gathering and interpreting information about student learning (see Syllabus, pages 51-54). Assessment should be structured so that students have the opportunity to demonstrate achievement of knowledge and understanding, and skills outcomes. This means that a variety of assessment instruments should be used as part of the assessment program. Selection of the assessment instrument will depend on the outcomes being targeted and the purpose for which the information will be used. For each task, establishing assessment criteria will assist in assessing the particular outcomes targeted and in providing feedback to students.

5.1 Assessment for assigning the School Certificate grade

The overall student achievement of the course outcomes will be determined using the School Certificate grading system. Levels of achievement, ranging from Excellent (A) to Elementary (E), are determined by applying the Geography Draft Course Performance Descriptors (pages 56-57 of the Syllabus) to the available evidence of student achievement. The grade appears on the student's Record of Achievement Part A. Student performance in the Australian History, Geography, Civics and Citizenship test will be reported separately on the Record of Achievement Part B and in the School Certificate Test Report.

Within the school, an appropriate assessment schedule should be devised which will enable information to be collected about student achievement of the course outcomes for the purpose of assigning a School Certificate grade. These summative tasks should be limited to 3—5 to avoid over-assessment, and can each target a number of outcomes. Tasks scheduled throughout the year should be weighted to ensure greater emphasis is given to those tasks held towards the end of the course.

While student achievement of course outcomes is developmental, that is, it should build throughout Stages 4 and 5, only achievement of outcomes in the School Certificate year should be measured for the summative grade assigned by the school (unless the student is exiting the course at the completion of Year 9 (see Syllabus, page 55)).

The School Certificate Test

From 2002, all candidates for the School Certificate will be required to sit for the Australian History, Geography, Civics and Citizenship test. The test provides an indication of student performance in relation to the course outcomes and content sampled. However, the School Certificate grade assigned by the school provides a fuller indication of student achievement in relation to the course as a whole.

The Geography (Mandatory) and History (Mandatory) Stage 5 sections of the syllabus documents provide the curriculum outcomes and content from which questions for the new School Certificate test will be drawn. Any information about the test for a particular year is published in the Official Notices in the Board Bulletin. Specifications for the Australian Geography section of the School Certificate test are provided on page 58 of the syllabus.