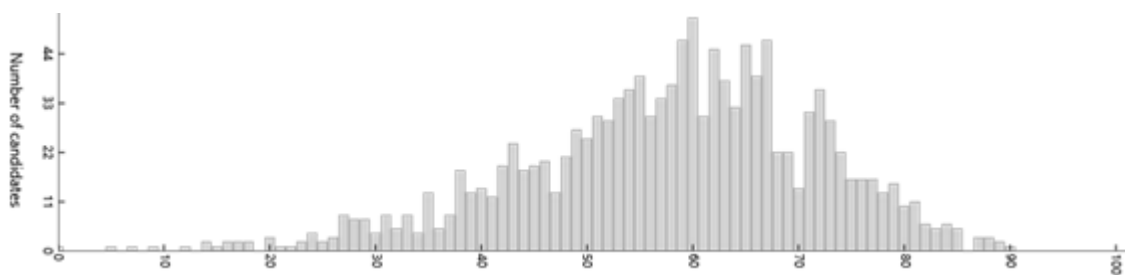# Summary report of the 2024 ATAR course examination report:
Geography

Year	Number who sat	Number of absentees
2024	1299	16
2023	1191	22
2022	1269	29
2021	1496	36

The number of candidates sitting and the number attempting each section of the examination can differ as a result of non-attempts across sections of the examination.

Examination score distribution

Summary

Attempted by 1299 candidates   Mean 57.44%   Max 90.00%   Min 0.00%

Section means were:
Section One: Multiple-choice   Mean 69.87%
Attempted by 1299 candidates   Mean 13.97(/20)   Max 20.00   Min 0.00
Section Two: Short response   Mean 57.59%
Attempted by 1298 candidates   Mean 23.03(/40)   Max 39.00   Min 0.00
Section Three: Extended response:
Part A: Unit 3   Mean 53.64%
Attempted by 1276 candidates   Mean 10.73(/20)   Max 20.00   Min 0.00
Section Three: Extended response:
Part B: Unit 4   Mean 48.51%
Attempted by 1263 candidates   Mean 9.70(/20)   Max 20.00   Min 0.00

General comments

The examination had an overall mean of 57.44% and was a fair assessment of the syllabus.

The examination used a topographic map from within Western Australia, for the first time since 2018. The Pemberton topographic map had a scale of 1:25 000 and was produced in 2020. The broadsheet provided candidates with high quality ground level and aerial photographs, a stacked bar graph showing the causes of global forest loss, a world map showing land conversion to from 1800 to 2010, a flow diagram showing how accessibility can affect quality of life and climate change/ biodiversity loss, and a table showing employment statistics in Western Australia.

Advice for candidates
- Practise the basic mathematical/arithmetical skills required as detailed in the skills section of the syllabus.
- Learn and practise the use of all basic topographic mapping skills, identified in the syllabus, as these are typically assessed each year.
- Practise using contour lines to identify the landform features identified in the syllabus.
- Practise calculating and comparing information on different sources, for example calculating distances of features identified on aerial photographs using the topographic map.
- Practise calculating the area of features using topographic maps at varying scales.
- Practise constructing simple annotated sketch maps using map conventions identified in the syllabus.
- Learn definitions and key terminology from the syllabus.
- Practise analysing various source types by writing statements that are correct and incorrect to help understand how questions may be asked.
- Practise reading and answering examination questions with confidence to avoid rewriting or adding superfluous information.
- Learn the meaning of key directional verbs (such as, describe, explain, assess) and practise using them to address questions more accurately.
- Use legitimate evidence and/or statistics in your answers.
- Write legibly to ensure markers can decipher what you have written.

Advice for teachers
- Ensure that students are familiar with the key terms and definitions in the syllabus.
- Emphasise the need for students to be neat and accurate in their approach to mapping skills, for example, constructing and annotating cross sections and sketch maps.
- Use a range of data sources for all overview and depth study content areas to ensure familiarity with the various ways data can be presented, for example flow diagrams.
- Teach students how to accurately measure data from sources such as bar graphs.
- Encourage students to write sentences that incorporate the data/evidence from a source as this saves time in the examination.
- Work in a variety of ways with photographs and satellite images, teaching students to calculate and establish position and direction between two sources, lengths and locations and direction of features.
- Ensure all elements of each syllabus point are taught. There is an expectation that students will demonstrate a greater depth of knowledge of each syllabus point. For example, each factor of sustainability.
- Demonstrate how questions can be created in different ways for each syllabus point. For example, students may be required to only address two factors of sustainability for six marks each.
- Model extended answers with brief introductions that provide only the context for the evaluation or discussion, rather than lengthy descriptions of the strategy.
- Demonstrate how to discuss and evaluate strategies, and the key differences between the two verbs.
- Teach students the meaning of the term 'interdependence' and provide opportunities to practise outlining interdependence as detailed in Unit 4.
- Provide good examples of two stakeholder groups as identified in the syllabus and analyse their views/attitudes, rather than what these groups are responsible for operationally. Some government agencies can be difficult to provide as an example in relation to their views, as they are often unable to hold public opinion.
- Encourage students to use a wide range of appropriate supporting evidence and examples specific to their answers, rather than examples that are general and vague.

Comments on specific sections and questions

Section One: Multiple-choice (20 Marks)

The mean score for Section One was 69.87%. Questions 1 to 13 were based on topographical mapping skills. Identifying landforms using contour lines, establishing the situation of a location as well as basic mathematical-based questions, such as calculating area, average gradient, travel time, proved difficult for some candidates. The use of photographs in conjunction with the topographic map was also difficult for some candidates. Of the remaining seven questions, five were source-based questions and two were definition questions. Some candidates found source analysis difficult when more than simple interpretation was required.

Section Two: Short response (40 Marks)

The mean score for Section Two was 57.59%. Questions 21 to 24 were based on topographical mapping skills, two questions were source based and six questions were based on a balance of Unit 3 and Unit 4 content. While some of the more difficult questions were done relatively well, some simpler content questions were not handled well. For example, a simple definition had a very low mean while describing a process had one of the highest means. A question on rural challenges, which has been a common topic in past examinations, also received a low mean score.

Section Three: Extended response: Part A: Unit 3 (20 Marks)

The mean score for Part A: Unit 3 was 53.64%. There was a 2.2% difference between Questions 33 and 34, indicating the complexity of the questions were balanced and there was an even split of candidates that chose questions 33 and 34. While part (b) for each question used a different key directional verb (discuss and explain), only a 2% difference was noted in results.

Section Three: Extended response: Part B: Unit 4 (20 Marks)

Overall, 65% of candidates chose Question 35, and 35% chose Question 36. Question 35 part (a) had a lower mean score of 43.4% than other Section Three questions, while Question 36 part (a) had the highest mean of 51.4% in Part B: Unit 4. The overall means of Questions 35 and 36, parts (a) and (b), were closely matched.